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1977

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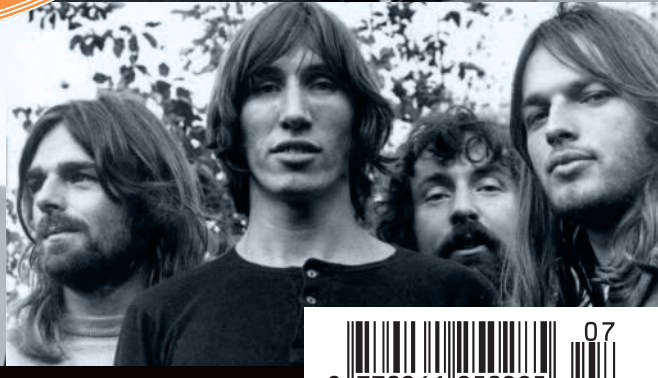

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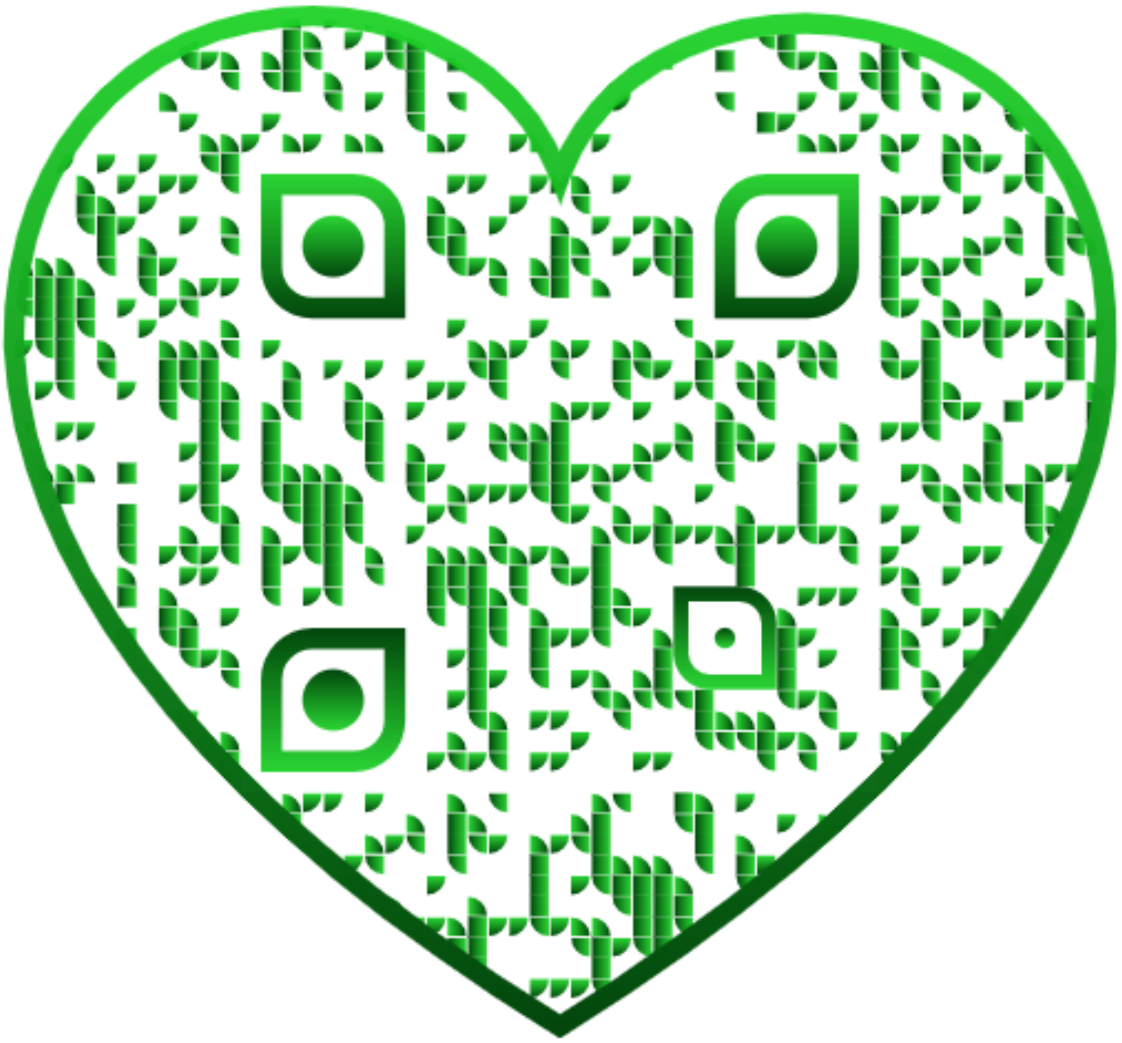


New releases for July 2022

Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
Fell From The Sun Downtempo And After Hours 1990-91
CDCHD 1596/ XXQLP2 089 (2LP)
After the house music explosion of 1987, Britain needed a lie down. 1990 and '91 brought a host of records that were made to accompany the sunrise; they slowed the pace on the dancefloor itself, right down to 98bpm. Woozy and hypnotic, this was the perfect post-club soundtrack.

Whatever You Want
Bob Crewe's 60s Soul Sounds
CDKEND 508
Throughout the 60s Bob Crewe embraced and enhanced soul music with his imaginative songs and productions. From Jerry Butler to Lynne Randell and all points between.

Atlanta Soul Artistry
KENT 523 (LP)
Atlanta black music, with the help of Bill Haney's productions, grew throughout the 60s. In 1973 GRC and Aware exploded onto the scene utilising extra talent from Chicago, Detroit and Los Angeles to create a first-class soul stable.

Funkadelic's Greatest Hits
CDSEWM 167
First-ever CD reissue of Funkadelic's 1975 "Greatest Hits" collection on Westbound Records. Gathering 45 mixes, LP versions and a unique edit of the instrumental 'A Joyful Process', it is a perfect entry point into the world of Funkadelic. LP reissue to follow later in 2022.

FROM THE VAULTS:

Ready Or Not - Thom Bell's Philly Soul Arrangements & Productions 1965-1978
CDTOP 488
Thom Bell, along with Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff, was part of the holy trinity of Philly soul. This is the first-ever compilation of his productions and arrangements. (Compiled by Bob Stanley)

The Daisy Age
CDCHD 1549/ XXQLP2 062 (2LP)
It wasn't really a movement, barely even a moment, but the Daisy Age was an ethos that briefly permeated pop, R&B and hip hop. The 90s, it promised, would be a lot easier going than the 80s. (Compiled by Bob Stanley)

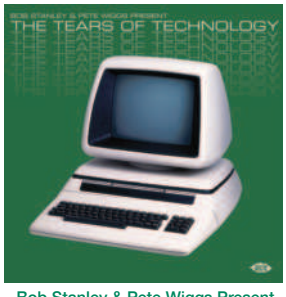
Tea & Symphony
The English Baroque Sound 1968-1974
CDCHD 1562/ XXQLP2 064 (2LP)
Never far away from the charts of the late 60s and early 70s, the English Baroque sound was informed by Paul McCartney's 'Eleanor Rigby', the Zombies' "Odessey And Oracle", and the chamber pop of the Bee Gees and Scott Walker. (Compiled by Bob Stanley)

Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
Paris In The Spring
CDCHD 1525/ XXQLP2 055 (2LP)
In May 1968, Paris was burning. Out of the student uprising came a new wave in French music. This new sound was exemplified by Serge Gainsbourg's "Histoire De Melody Nelson", but it wasn't an isolated classic – this was a golden age for French pop.

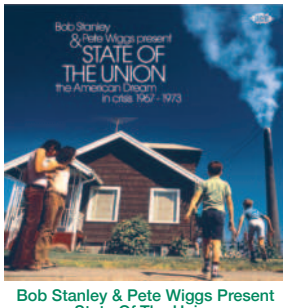
Bob Stanley and Pete Wiggs Present
Three Day Week
When The Lights Went Out 1972-1975
CDCHD 1542/ XXQLP2 058 (2LP)
In 1973 Britain was still a nation of outside bogs; tens of thousands were housed in wartime pre-fabs. Soundtracking the decline were mavericks armed with fuzzy guitars, a primitive synthesiser, drums made of dustbin lids and a pitch-black sense of humour.

Bob Stanley and Pete Wiggs Present
English Weather
CDCHD 1484/ XXQLP2 049 (2LP)
The autumnal sound of Britain at the turn of the 70s, looking out through wet window panes to a new decade with a mixture of melancholy and optimism for what might come next.

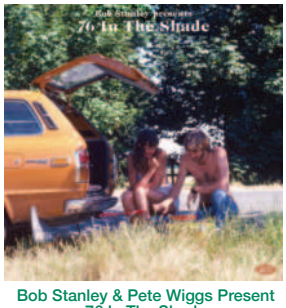
Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
Occasional Rain
CDCHD 1570/ XXQLP2 070 (2LP)
This is England, the day after the 60s. It's a time of flux. On the cusp of progressive rock but without a rule book. The result is some wonderful, atmospheric, rain-flecked music.



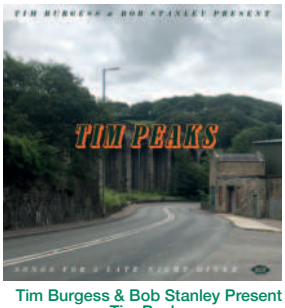
Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
The Tears Of Technology
CDCHD 1566/ XXQLP2 068 (2LP)
Previous generations had often disparaged synths as dehumanising machines but, at the turn of the 80s, a new crop of musicians appeared who could coax them into creating modern and decidedly moving music.



Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
State Of The Union
The American Dream In Crisis
CDCHD 1533/ XXQLP2 057 (2LP)
These songs display a vulnerability that the Greatest Generation and the pre-Beatles generation had never experienced before. It's the sound of a country trying to work its way out of a crisis.



Bob Stanley & Pete Wiggs Present
76 In The Shade
CDCHD 1580/ XXQLP2 073 (2LP)
The summer of 1976 has remained a benchmark for long, hot summers – there may have been scorchers since, but none have seemed quite as relentless. This album evokes the feel of that summer.



Tim Burgess & Bob Stanley Present
Tim Peaks
Songs For A Late-Night Diner
CDCHD 1555/ XXQLP2 063 (2LP)
A soundtrack for the Tim Peaks Diner at dusk, maybe just a couple of tables occupied. Outside, the mists are rising and the rain is falling.

Bob Stanley & Jason Wood Present:
Cafe Exil
CDCHD 1582/ XXQLP2 074 (2LP)
This is the imagined soundtrack to Bowie and Iggy's Euro travels in the mid-late seventies, named after one of their Berlin hangouts.

68
Linx

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FEATURES

56 JOE ELLIOTT Forty-five years since forming (in 1977, appropriately enough for this issue) and with a frankly obscene amount of record sales under their belts, Def Leppard are still vowing to add to their legacy. Their frontman talks T.Rex, tragedy, and chart battles with Michael Jackson

64 xPROPAGANDA As Propaganda founding members Susanne Freytag and Claudia Brücken re-emerge with a (slightly) modified name and new LP, they tell us why going from hanging out with Throbbing Gristle to watching Frankie go nuclear was all part of the fun

68 LINX Now a regular fixture on our TV screens, David Grant's first flush of fame came as part of Britfunk outfit Linx. He relives their brief, bright brush with stardom

72 JOHN OTWAY After his first chart entry in 1977, 'Rock'n'roll's greatest failure' (TM) embraced one-hit wonder status – so successfully that he ended up getting another hit 25 years later. After celebrating his 5,000th show, he picks out 10 memorable moments from an epic underdog journey

76 COVER STORY
1977 SPECIAL
Remember the last jubilee? Do you remember the music, when ABBA met Suicide and Two Sevens clashed? We reckon 1977 was an annus mirabilis for music, and we can give you 77 releases (plus a few more) from that year that we believe support our case...

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RECORD COLLECTOR

July 2022 Issue 533

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PPA

The *RC* staff's favourite... 1977 song

PAUL LESTER **Rose Royce** **Wishing On A Star**
For the strings and breathtaking transitions, and Gwen Dickey's masterclass in restrained passion… In public, I'd go for something by Television or Two Sevens Clash. In private, I'd swear it was this Billie Rae Calvin-penned classic that, along with Minnie Riperton's Lovin' You and Deniece Williams' Free, seemed to invent the modern soul ballad.

TIM JONES **Meat Loaf** **Bat Out Of Hell**
In the brashest of music years, nothing can outdo this nigh-on 10-minute pomp-rock epic for sheer brass. Heavenly Marv-ellous!

JOHNNY SHARP **The Eagles** **Hotel California (single)**
"They stab it with their steely knives, but they just can't kill the beast." Punk certainly tried, and I personally have checked out from the Eagles appreciation society over the years, but when it comes to this particular deathless anthem, I can never leave.

NIALL DOHERTY **David Bowie** **'Heroes'**
Like The Jam, David Bowie released two era-defining records in '77. In a crowded field, this is the pick of the bunch, a panoramic rock classic that's unhurried, intense, uplifting and melancholy all at the same time.

CHARLES DONOVAN **ABBA** **The Name Of The Game**
The Album was the first LP I asked my parents for, figuring they'd be soft touches if I asked them during a hospital stay.

VAL CUTTS **Evelyn 'Champagne' King** **Shame**
The first ever 12" single that I bought. A fantastic, low-down dirty and sassy disco groove. I was torn between this and Alessi Brothers' Oh, Lori – but choosing this makes me sound like I was more 'out there on the floor' in '77.

PETER BARRY **Bee Gees** **Stayin' Alive**
For me, this is one of the best tracks of 1977. It's upbeat, and a timeless classic.

BILL EDWARDS **The Clash** **1977**
Too many great records to fit into that year, but I'll go with this aptly titled B-side of White Riot proclaiming, "No Elvis, Beatles, or the Rolling Stones" (a memo seemingly missed in the years since by a string of *RC* editors when deciding on cover stories).

IAN SHIRLEY **Sex Pistols** **God Save The Queen**
This record changed my life and started my long love affair with music. Thanks, boys!

STEVE BURNISTON **Steely Dan** **Aja**
A brilliant, inspiring masterpiece, *Aja*'s extraordinary title track includes sublime performances from Steve Gadd and Wayne Shorter.

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Hello, and welcome to RC!533

It's a matter of record that The Clash declared, on the B-side to White Riot, "No Elvis, Beatles or The Rolling Stones in 1977". On a similarly iconoclastic tip – and I'm relying on my increasingly failing memory here so apologies if I've got this wrong – I seem to recall reading in the *NME* that same year a diatribe penned by those most terribles of enfants, Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons, next to a big collage of images of Presley and Dylan, Lennon and Jagger, entitled "Take this God and stuff him". The article essentially argued that those 50s/60s titans had outstayed their welcome and were, furthermore, overrated and just… over. It would have been a tough old time to have launched a magazine like *Record Collector*, because there was a burning imperative to torch the past and the focus was very much on the present and future.

You can see why music lovers might have felt sufficiently emboldened to make these kinds of grandiose claims in 1977: there was so much new music to love, it suddenly felt as though "old" music was surplus to requirement. Ironically, it was probably the punk bands who were most rooted in historical antecedents, in garage and *Nuggets,* the Stooges, Velvets and MC5. But everywhere else you listened, from soul to reggae, pop to proto-electronic dance, your ears were assailed by sounds that seemed to come from nowhere – and not just the obviously futuristic stuff like Kraftwerk and Summer/Moroder; even the R&B records, from Shame to Wishing On A Star, effected a break with tradition and were emphatically *not* influenced by Motown or Philly. Our cover story this month attempts to corral all the great music from '77 (even those numerals look forward-pointing!) into 14 pages: we re-review the 77 best records (and a few extra because it was *that* good) and speak to some of the musicians who were there and helped make it happen.

To keep the theme going, we have an in-depth interview with Joe Elliott on the release of a brand-new album by Def Leppard, who formed in 1977, and a breakdown of the 10 best ever gigs put on by John Otway, whose Really Free was a great, out-of-the-blue hit in '77. There are features, too, on non-'77 stuff – Teutonic-electronic femmes fatales xPropaganda and the Britfunk Becker-Fagen, Linx – and we have a snoop around John Peel's record collection. He doubtless owned a couple himself from '77.

Stay safe, and see you next month,

Paul Lester

DAF FUNK

For me, *RC* is the best music mag, and every month it's a great joy to get, digitally or in paper form. I even prefer it to my former darlings, *Classic Pop, Uncut* and *Mojo*.

This time, I'm so thankful because of the Thomas Leer story [*RC* 532]; he is one of my all-time favourite artists. But please, let me say something about [the reference to] DAF's Kebabträume on page 29: the song is absolutely not only about dreams of kebab. It's about the dreams of the Turkish immigrants who came to Germany in the late 70s and early 80s and the way they were left alone by the government, resulting in the kind of ghettoization we see now in nearly every major Western European city. Kebabträume offered a clear-sighted vision of the future.

Thanks for the wonderful mag,

Andreas Kötter, email

FRUITS OF THE GLOOM

Back when I was young, if I bought a 12" vinyl LP I tended to know that it would play at 33 1/3 rpm and have around 20 minutes of music per side. After an initial bed down, a released CD would have 60-70 minutes of music. During today's reported shortage of pressing plants and no doubt imminent shortage of vinyl due to the current state of the world, why oh why are we not giving value on a lot of released LPs?

Take the latest Rammstein album, *Zeit*: it is released as a 2LP 45rpm edition. The LP has barely 10 minutes on each side, giving a total playing time of 40 minutes. I hear you cry, well, could they not have released it as a single 33 rpm vinyl LP? Of course, they could, but chose not to. They are not alone. It is a rapidly increasing trend. And don't give me the excuse it increases the quality of the playback, as it does not.

So, if we had sold the album as a single LP, we could have saved time for our overstretched pressing plants, save on vinyl, and hence save on the cost of packaging of the album, and packaging and postage which we could pass onto our loyal fans and customers. Yeah, right.

It is this sort of big label attitude that is stifling small but valuable label releases such as Fruits de Mer because they cannot get them released in a sensible timescale and pressed at reasonable prices. And just so you don't think I'm anti-Rammstein – which I'm not, just the opposite – their CD single release of Zick Zack is a joy, with its bundled magazine and stickers… Just shows what can be done. **Dave Hodgson, email**

FRUITS OF THE GLOOM (SLIGHT RETURN)

Thanks, Dave, for copying me in, and for the plug for Fruits de Mer! It's certainly tough for small labels to get vinyl pressed to a reasonable timescale and for a reasonable cost at the moment. I recently asked for a simple reallocation of delivery of copies of the forthcoming LP by The Chemistry Set [see Under The Radar, *RC* 532] between two delivery points and was told any change to my order, however trivial, would mean the whole job being re-costed to a new rate-card, adding over £400 to the bill.

As for 7" singles… the latest quote I've had for a run of 400 singles looks like the kind of quote I was getting for an LP a couple of years ago.

Keith, Fruits de Mer Records

POSTCARDS FROM THE LEDGE

Attn. Joe Geesin [*RC* 531]. I read with great interest your article on picture postcards from Eastern Europe in the 70s and 80s. It bought to mind a few that I'd picked up over the years as part of my collection of Madonna records, CDs, etc. Unfortunately, I don't remember exactly how I came about them, possibly from a record fair or through a collector advertising in your magazine. Either way, they are quite rare and unique, don't you think?

In all my years of collecting I don't think I've ever seen them on sale since my purchase.

Sean Brady, email

HIGH PLAIN GRIFTER

Thanks for a great read and to Rob Hughes for his excellent Bowie/Roxy feature [*RC* 531]. It made me dig out my copy of Virginia Plain that I bought on its release. It came in this sleeve as shown and have wondered if it was limited to first pressings? Sadly, my 17-year-old self couldn't help himself scrawling name and number on both label and sleeve.

You know that question, "What advice would you give your teenage self…"

Peter Thomas, email

Readers, are you familiar with this iteration of the Virginia Plain single sleeve (inset)? Let us know. **PL**

BANGOR MASHING

Hate to be a pedant but I spotted two glaring errors in [*RC* 531] which kinda irked me. In the article on

I Was There

A reader's recollection of a key music event

This month:
Marillion, London, 7 November 1989

This was the first major headline gig Marillion played with new singer Steve Hogarth.

A few of the fans did get a glimpse of the new boy back in August at the video shoot for the first single, Hooks in You, from the new album *Seasons End*. The expectation in the queue was fantastic, mainly to see if he could cut it live...

The doors opened and I managed to get a good spot on the front row in the balcony; the Astoria was always one of my favourite venues in London. Just after 8.30pm, the house lights went down and the fans went mad. The first song of the night was the lead track on *Seasons End*, The King Of Sunset Town, with its long intro. Each member of the band walked on and got a huge cheer. Then Steve H walked on and got the biggest ovation!

Next up were two Fish-era tracks, Slainte Mhath and Script For A Jester's Tear, which he handled very well. Next was another new song, The Uninvited Guest, on which Steve used the "magic gloves", which first got an airing on *TV-am* the previous April, with an astonished Lorraine Kelly – a nifty little gadget!

Next were two songs from the *Clutching At Straws* album before we got three more from *Seasons End*, then they continued with three from *Misplaced Childhood* – Kayleigh, Lavender and Heart Of Lothian – then to finish the main set it was two more new numbers: Hooks In You and The Space.

Then it was encore time. First up was a rousing Incommunicado, which had the whole place jumping like loons. The second encore was the final track from *Seasons End* to be played, the fantastic After Me, and to send everybody home on a high it was Market Square Heroes.

What an amazing gig. On the tube back to Paddington the overall view was that the band had made a very canny choice of singer. Many years later, Marillion would be the first band to use the internet, the first to use crowdfunding, and in September 2020 they had a whole weekend of online concerts, possibly the first band to do this...

I would never have thought that would happen, way back on a cold November night at the end of the 80s, in London Town.

Gary Uzzell

record shop bags IT Records had NOTHING to do with the old hippie rag apart from the fact that the guy who owned the record shop/s which printed the bags filched the design and name. The guy in question was the late Cliff Moore and his IT chain of shops were originally based in his hometown of Portadown – though he also later opened shops in Lisburn and here in Belfast.

I knew Cliff well and he never got the credit he deserved for starting up the first local indie label here in Northern Ireland, putting contemporary local bands on record. Unfortunately, most of the bands on his label were local rock acts from the Lurgan/Portadown direction and apart from The Outcasts (whose first EP he released) NONE were punk bands (though it doesn't stop stupid collectors forking out silly money for some of his releases...). That's probably why his label is always overlooked when compared to Terri Hooley's Good Vibrations Belfast-based outfit. Cliff's main passion was always 50s rock'n'roll/rockabilly and especially Elvis and Sun Records (he even named one of his Belfast shops Sun Records in tribute). Cliff passed away during the pandemic and was a lovely man and diehard rock'n'roll fanatic right to the very end. A decent feature on Cliff's IT label and/or Terri's Good Vibrations label, too, is long overdue in *RC*.

Similarly, Gavin Martin, who I also knew well, especially in the punk era, and was featured in your obituaries, lived and grew up in Bangor, NOT Belfast.

There's still no decent coverage of rockabilly in *RC* – but I bought the current issue for the Bowie and Flamin' Groovies pieces. For the record, I was in the band RUDI, the first punk band here in Belfast and also who released the first record on Good Vibrations, Big Time, all those years ago... Two copies went for almost £200 each recently on eBay. There must be people out there who have much more money than sense...

No hard feelings...

Brian Young, email

BATH TIME

I found the article/interview written on Tears For Fears by Chris Roberts in my husband's copy of *RC* 529 a very interesting and informative read. As a new reader to *RC*, I was pleased to see the amount of detail in the article, and it clarified and expanded on some of the information that I already knew about the duo.

I was delighted at the reference to them as "Funk Floyd", having been a fan of Floyd since the 70s, and fully understood the comment, "Drawing out fans who weren't sure if we were allowed to love TFF", because I was one of those misguided people who possibly thought them a "pretty-boy synth-pop duo" originally. "Maverick masters of the 80s" sums them up beautifully.

All observations show a true understanding of what the duo were doing: their potent lyrics and clever melodies knitted together with exceptional results, owing in no small part to their "genre-straddling", as Chris eloquently describes. Curt explains that it is "emotional" content for them rather than "commercial" because they search for a meaning, which surely has to be more satisfying for them as musicians.

It also resonates with me personally as a fan, as I appreciate their hard work and the thought they put into what they produce in their music. My favourite track is still Everybody Wants To Rule The World. It came out in 1985 when I had just met my husband and reminds me how the strength of our relationship helped us to face all our challenges in life. "We had depth, but it took years for people to realise" certainly rings true for me. They have definitely produced the "meaningful" that they refer to so well. Experimenting with their sound made them unique, as it did Queen, because they (TFF) could have stayed stuck in electronica but chose to follow a more difficult but rewarding path.

I will now never be ashamed in my advancing years to admit to being a fan, as this piece of writing has re-ignited my enjoyment in their music. I will now be grabbing *RC* from the doormat before my husband has a look in.

Ann Pollard, Burnley

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

David Corio began his career as a freelance photographer with *NME* in 1978. His work has featured in many publications (including p68 of this issue) and been widely exhibited. His book, *The Black Chord*, featuring photos of black musicians, will be published in the UK in Spring 2023.

Since (**x**)**Propaganda** (p64) made their debut album *A Secret Wish*, **David Stubbs** has enjoyed a 37-year career as a music journalist awaiting their follow-up. He is currently completing his epic book on the history of British comedy.

Alongside his passion for prog, partiality for pop and fervency for The Fall, Britfunk have always delighted **Daryl Easlea**. In 1981, *Intuition* by **Linx** (p68) was his album of the year, a fact he shares with David Grant.

John Otway (p72) recently celebrated his 5,000th gig. He has released 12 albums, had two hit singles, and BBC viewers voted his song Beware Of The Flowers the nation's seventh favourite lyric ever.

RRPG EDITOR WANTED

Record Collector has a vacancy for editor of the biennial *Rare Record Price Guide*. Soon to publish its 18th edition, with a subscriber-based website, the *RRPG* is the ultimate, authoritative voice on valuations, the result of months – years – of forensic research.

The job will involve assembling the *Guide*, sourcing data, pictures, and sleeves, and also working on the magazine, checking prices, and the online version of the *RRPG*, updating it daily. It will be a wide-ranging but flexible hybrid home/office role, part-time/freelance, for someone steeped in vinyl and the changing nature of collecting in the 21st century.

Email paul.lester@metropolis.co.uk with a covering letter explaining why you're right for the role and include: a 150-word review of the last album you bought, styled as per *RC*'s album reviews; a breakdown of how you would go about pricing up the 10 discs on a 10 Of The Best Sheffield records; and an explanation of how you would research and write a new entry for the *RRPG*.

The ideal candidate will be organised, scrupulous in their attention to detail, and have a wealth of experience in the area of vinyl (and CD) valuation. If fortunate, you will get to work with a great, knowledgeable team on a highly regarded publication in the thriving rock magazine sector.

Successful candidates will be contacted to attend an interview.

Closing date for entry: 27 June

NEXT MONTH
RECORD COLLECTOR
IN SHOPS 14 JULY

ISLAND RECORDS

PLUS CLARE GROGAN + ASSOCIATES + LOU CHRISTIE + FRANZ FERDINAND + ROBERT CRAY + 1992 COMPILATIONS

AUCTIONS SPECIAL

Keep your ears Peeled

Personal collection of DJ **John Peel** goes on the block

On 14 June, a carefully-selected array of items from **John Peel**'s personal collection was offered for sale in London. During his broadcasting years from 1967 to 2004, the longest-serving original BBC Radio 1 DJ acquired 120,000-plus records and memorabilia items. In 2012, some 106,000 records were placed online, including 26,000-plus LPs and 40,000-plus 7" singles. Peel (originally John Ravenscroft) left his archive for the use of musicologists, researchers, musicians and fans, but his family have decided that now is the time for the first *Live In Session: Property From The John Peel Archive* auction, via Bonham's of London. Its Director of Popular Culture, Katherine Schofield, noted that the lots "offered directly by the family, comprise some of Peel's most collectable and rare records, many accompanied by letters from the artists or their management". In addition, there were "a number of the test-pressings that were the source of the first airplay for landmark songs".

Last year, the *Rare Record Price Guide* editor, Ian Shirley, visited the archive and advised the Ravenscroft family about how they could make some of the collection available for sale, recommending an auction. They note that Peel garnered "a wealth of souvenirs throughout his life. He had not only a voracious appetite for vinyl, but a keen sense of what memorabilia, ephemera and

"We had no desire to split up his beloved record collection"

correspondence might find an interested audience in decades to come. In going through the accumulation of 40 years of pop music, we decided that some of the most interesting items might find a home with fans of his programme or of the artists whose music he played. Bonham's have assisted us to carefully select what is being offered for sale, and we hope that these items find the attention and

Clockwise from top left: John Peel, lots from his collection, including his gramophone, John Lennon & Yoko Ono signed album, Pink Floyd 1968 concert poster.

appreciation that we're sure he'd feel that they warranted. We had no desire to split up his beloved record collection, but have included in the sale a selection of particularly rare or unique records that do not take away from the integrity of his archive."

Among the lots on offer were a signed **John Lennon/Yoko Ono** *Unfinished Music No 2: Life With The Lions* mono LP, with Peel's numbered inventory sticker on it, and the inner sleeve annotated by Lennon and Ono, including a Lennon drawing of the couple. The text reads, "*Dear John – this isn't the proper master cut – it's in stereo, really, but here it is anyway, love John*", (estimate, £20,000). Lennon appeared on Peel's *Night Ride* radio show in December 1968, prior to the album's release by Apple in May 1969, after EMI had refused to issue the album with its original sleeve, and another company, Technik, was hired to print it. The initial UK run of the album was very limited and its sales were low in the wake of critical flak.

Other highlights among the records up for consideration were **The Rolling Stones** signed promotional LP (£8,000); **Marc Bolan** unissued *Hard On Love* LP, from 1972 (£6,000); **Queen** *II* LP, with hand-written **Freddie Mercury** letter, 1974 (£1,500); **The Damned** signed *Damned Damned Damned* LP, 1977 (£2,000); **Joy Division** An Ideal For Living 7", with **Stephen Morris** letter, 1978 (£6,000); **Sex Pistols** *Never Mind The Bollocks...* acetate (£7,000); **Nirvana** Love Buzz 7", 1988 (£4,000); **The Clash** London Calling 8", 1979 (£3,000); **U2** Joshua Tree Collection 7", 1987 (£2,000).

From Peel's memorabilia collection, standouts included a **Pink Floyd** Evolutions foil poster, January 1968 (£10,000); **Joy Division** *Unknown Pleasures* poster (£4,000); **The Jimi Hendrix Experience** *Christmas On Earth*, London Olympia, 1967, poster (£1,500); **David Bowie** handwritten letter with stage sketches (£4,000); **Yoko Ono** note re demos (£2,000); Peel's gramophone (£1,200).

See bonhams.com, johnpeelarchive.com.

The Cure signed test-pressings above-left, and multi-disc lots from The Moody Blues, Status Quo and The Police

Testing times, pressing matters

Biggest dedicated auction of white label test-pressings ever, held for music charities

A *White Label Auction In Aid Of The BRIT Trust* sees some 175 lots of white label test-pressings offered for sale, benefiting charities such as the BRIT School and Nordoff-Robbins music therapy. Some of them comprise multiple sets of white label test-pressings, notably **The Moody Blues** (10 records), **Status Quo** (11) and **The Police** (six), offering a number of treasure troves from a number of very collectable bands. It's the third such auction, the first having taken place in 2019, and it's also the biggest such single sale of white label test-pressings to have ever hit the auction block.

In this instance, Omega Auctions of Newton-Le-Willows presided over the white label test-pressing event on 7 June, and it was set to raise even more than previous auctions of white label test-pressings that made nearly £25,000 on 12 October 2019 and £34,000 on 5 May 2021.

As vinyl sales continue to rise, the demand for commercially available white label test-pressings has increased, and more and more bands are offering them in small runs (usually of 15-75 copies) via their websites. However, most white label test-pressings without a commercial run are produced in even smaller numbers, often only 5-10 copies, as they're made purely for internal record company usage, rather than for sale on the open market. Hence, most white label test-pressings remain in the hands of artists and their management, or are filed in labels' archives, making many of them highly sought-after by collectors. Among the major and independent record labels offering white label test-pressings in the June auction were Universal's A&M, Chess, Island, Motown, Polydor and Virgin, plus, among others, Sony, Warners, Cherry Red, Cooking Vinyl and Domino.

Some of the white label test-pressings up for grabs were artist-signed and annotated platters of potentially even greater value, from the likes of The Cure's **Robert Smith** (*Acoustic Hits*, *Disintegration*, *Pornography*, *Seventeen Seconds, Head On The Door* (estimate, £200-£300 each), **Dio** (*Holy Diver*), Magazine's **Howard Devoto** (*Correct Use Of Soap*) and **OMD** (*Souvenir*, *OMD*).

Other catalogue white label test-pressings up for bidding included discs produced for **ABC**, **Adele**, **Alex Harvey**, **Alison Moyet**, **Art Of Noise**, **Beastie Boys**, **Buzzcocks**, **Belle & Sebastian**, **Biffy Clyro**, **Black Grape**, **Brian Eno**, **Brad Fiedel**, **Buggles**, **The Cranberries**, **Eric Clapton**, **Cream**, **Christy Moore**, **Cocteau Twins**, **Def Leppard**, **Del Amitri**, **Dr Strangely Strange**, **Diana Ross**, **Dusty Springfield**, **Embrace**, **Eurythmics**, **The Fall**, **Foals**, **Genesis**, **Gorillaz**, **Iron Maiden**, **Hawkwind**, **Heaven 17**, **Iggy Pop**, **Mike Oldfield**, **Mott The Hoople**, **Muse**, **John Martyn**, **J Mascis**, **Joe Cocker**, **Mark Knopfler**, **The Members**, **Mercury Rev**, **Ocean Colour Scene**, **The Orb**, **Phil Lynott**, **The Proclaimers**, **Richard Thompson**, **Rick Wakeman**, **Rizzle Kicks**, **Ron Sexsmith**, **Ronnie Lane**, **Rory Gallagher**, **Roxy Music**, **Rudimental**, **Rufus Wainwright**, **Rush**, **Simple Minds**, **Sparks**, **Spice Girls**, **S Club 7**, **Skids**, **The Specials**, **Sam Cooke**, **Scott Walker**, **Shirley Collins & Davy Graham**, **Squeeze**, **Suzanne Vega**, **T.Rex**, **10cc**, **The Teardrop Explodes**, **Tears For Fears**, **Tim Hardin**, **Thin Lizzy**, **The Ruts**, **UB40**, **Underworld**, **The Who**, **Wilko Johnson**, **Paul Weller**, **Robbie Williams**.

White label test-pressings of more recent releases included sets by **Anne Marie**, **Biffy Clyro**, **Charli XCX**, **Coldplay** and **Royal Blood**, plus original soundtracks of *Grease*, *Mamma Mia* and *Peaky Blinders*, as well as 7" singles boxes from Chess, Motown and Trojan.

"Many records were also signed, so we expected a record sum"

Sometime *RC* contributor and A&R Director at Universal, Jonny Chandler, who initiated the concept of the *White Label Auction*, notes that "interest in the auction has grown markedly over the past two editions and, this year there were even more rare test-pressings to tempt bidders. This included, for the first time, 7" singles, which should help us set a new record for the amount raised. Huge thanks to the artists and management, record labels and colleagues, who dug deep and donated so generously with highly collectible recordings".

The Auction Manager of Omega Auctions, Dan Hampson, added that the white label test-pressing auction has proven "very popular among our buyers. We've seen a sustained rise in prices for both vinyl and music memorabilia in the last few years, which shows no sign of slowing down, so this sale came along at a perfect time. The fact that the items came directly from the labels, the scarcity of the white labels, and also that many of the records were signed, has meant that we expected the total raised to be a record this year."

See omegaauctions.co.uk.

Guitar nirvana

Kurt Cobain Fender sells for seven figures

The 20-22 May auction of 1,300-plus lots by juliensauctions.com included **Kurt Cobain**'s 1969 Fender Mustang guitar that he played in **Nirvana**'s 1991 Smells Like Teen Spirit video, which made $4.5 million. His 1965 Dodge Dart car went for $375,000, while **Alex Lifeson** (Rush) guitars hit $384,000, $224,000, $218,750, $187,500, $128,000, £128,000, $112,500 and $102,400. A **Johnny Cash** guitar/NFT was $437,500, **Bruce Springsteen** Born To Run handwritten lyrics, $44,800, Soundgarden's **Chris Cornell** guitar, $76,800, **Elvis Presley** guitars, $64,000 each, ring, $75,000, **Slash** guitar, $51,200, **Madonna** Material Girl video clothing, $287,500, **Waylon Jennings** guitar, $179,000. *The Collection Of **Bill Wyman** And Sticky Fingers Restaurant* had 150 items, including **The Rolling Stones** guitars, notably prototype/custom basses, plus record awards, handbills,

> **"Eight Rush guitars sold for $100k-plus each"**

posters, unpublished photos, artwork, passes. A **Ringo Starr** NFT including artwork/music was offered 13 June. ■ May auctions by Activity, Dover, Delaware, included (7) signed guitars from **Alice Cooper**, **Taylor Swift**, **Bon Jovi**, **Eagles**, **Grateful Dead**, **Mötley Crüe**, ex-The Beatles' **Pete Best**, **The Who**, **Aerosmith**, **Pink Floyd**/with drumhead, **Hank Williams Jr**/and violin, **Lynyrd Skynyrd** signed drumhead (28) **The Doobie Brothers** signed drumhead, **Billy Joel** signed piano model, signed guitars from **Leon Russell**, **AC/DC**, **Keith Richards**, **Joe Bonamassa**, **Jeff Beck**, **Eric Clapton**, **Alan Parsons**, **Mötley Crüe**. ■ Beastie Boys' **Mike D**'s childhood 6,300 sq ft, six-bedroom, eight-bathroom apartment in Eldorado Building, Upper West Side, New York, was offered via corcoran.com in May for $19.5 million. ■ A 26 May charity auction via artsy.net included Sonic Youth's **Kim Gordon** skateboard, **Grimes** clothing. ■ In May, **Engelbert Humperdinck**'s 5,600 sq ft, five-bedroom, five-bathroom house, with cinema, pool, games room, wine cellar, Bel-Air, Los Angeles, was offered by Coldwell Banker for $6.2 million. ■ On 17 May, an **Oasis** guitar sold via Artpeges.com for £325,000. ■ On 18 May, **Matt Freeman** (Rancid) offered a bass via reverb.com. ■ A 22 May auction via goldin.co included **Prince** outfit, **Michael Jackson** make-up box, Beat It handwritten lyrics, **Jimi Hendrix** feather boa, handwritten lyrics from **Bruce Springsteen** (including an outtake), **Bob Dylan**, **Carl Perkins**, **Tupac Shakur**, plus Hummer car. ■ A 19 May auction by rrauction.com included **Bob Dylan** handwritten setlist, poems, lyrics including All Along The Watchtower ($48,400), Knockin' On Heaven's Door ($36,363), **The Beatles**, **Led Zeppelin** record awards, **Prince** shirts, leggings, voicemail tape, **Jim Morrison** Love Her Madly handwritten lyrics ($35,000), handwritten lyrics from **Drake**, **Noel Gallagher**, **Tom Petty**/plus acetate, guitars from **Brian May**, **The Monkees**, **Jeff Beck** (bargain $286). ■ On 26 April, a poster for **Sex Pistols**' gig at Manchester Free Trade Hall, July 1976, sold via omegaauctions.co.uk for £22,000. ■ On 5 June, Pantera's **Vinnie Paul**'s *Estate Auction* of 700-plus lots was held via backstageauctions.com. It included drum kit, guitars, record awards, clothing, artwork, posters, passes, furniture, slot machines, sports memorabilia. ■ In May, **Janet Jackson**'s three-bedroom, three-bathroom apartment with library, at Trump International Hotel, New York, was offered via realtor.com for $8.995 million. ■ On 7 July, a one-off Ionic Original disc of **Bob Dylan**'s reworked Blowin' In The Wind is offered via christies.com (estimate, £1 million).

Kurt Cobain guitar makes four million-plus

Acoustic

*Something Borrowed, Something New: A Tribute To **John Anderson***, with **Eric Church**, **Brent Cobb**, **Luke Combs**, **Ashley McBryde**, **Del McCoury**, **John Prine**, **Sturgill Simpson**, **Gillian Welch**, Easy Eye Sound, 5 August. ■ **The Wise Monkeys**' *This Is Our Record,* with The Members' **JC Carroll**, **Nick Cash**, Anglocentric, 29 July. ■ **Waylon Jennings** *Just To Satisfy You/Waylon/Country Folk With The Kimberlys* 2CD, Morello, 8 July. ■ **Johnny Cash** *Forever Words* book, Canongate, 3 November. ■ **Labi Siffre** *My Song* 9CD, with *Labi Siffre*, *The Singer And The Song*, *Crying, Laughing, Loving, Lying*, *For The Children*, *Remember My Song*, *Happy*, *So Strong*, *Man Of Reason*, *The Last Songs*, 44 bonuses, Edsel, 17 June. Due: June (17) **Joni Mitchell** *Blue*, Rhino, **Merle Haggard** *I'm Always On A Mountain When I Fall*, Music On CD (24) **Pete Seeger** *Freight Train*, **Judy Collins** *3*, Greyscale July (1) Beth Nielsen Chapman's **Yvonne Lyon**/**Gareth Davies-Jones**/**David Lyon** *Trace The Line*, yvonnelyonmusic.com (22) **Kenny Rogers** *The Essential* 3CD, Spectrum August (5) **Phil Ochs** *Rehearsals For Retirement*, Music On CD.

Blues

Eric Clapton *Nothing But The Blues* CD; 2LP with bonus; *Super Deluxe* DVD, BD boxes, with bonus each, plus book, lithograph, poster, guitar strings/plectrums, bandana, CD with four bonuses, Reprise, 24 June. Due: June (24) **Freddie King** *Texas Oil* 2CD, Soul Jam September **Phil Guy**/**Jimmy Dawkins** 2CD (JSP).

Hip-Hop/Dance+

The *Pitch* hip hop conference, including workshops, Q&As, gigs, DJ sets, at Glasgow St Luke's, Space, Many Studios, is on 27 August. ■ **Omarion** *Full Circle* book, Target, 13 September. ■ SH Fernando Jr *The Chronicles Of DOOM* **MF Doom** book is due via Astra House, 2024. Due: July (1) **Burna Boy** *Love Damini*, Admiral TBC **MIA** *Mata*, Island.

Indie

Sam Knee *Scene In Between USA* book, Thames & Hudson, 6 October. ■ **Suede** *Autofiction* CD, clear LP, 180g LP, box with clear LP, CD, stencil, postcards, poster, signed set-list, BMG, 16 September. ■ The Charlatans' **Tim Burgess** *The Party Continues* book, DK, November. ■ ***The Baseball Project*** is due, with **Peter Buck**, **Mike Mills**, **Scott McCaughey** (REM), **Steve Wynn** (The Dream Syndicate), **Linda Pitmon** (Filthy Friends). ■ ***The Cribs*** *Definitive* 2CD, 24 bonuses, *The New Fellas*, *Men's Needs Women's Needs Whatever* cassettes, Sonic Blew, 29 July. Due: July (1) **Guided By Voices** *Tremblers And Goggles By Rank*, GBV August (5) **Kasabian** *The Alchemist's Euphoria*, Columbia September (9) The xx's **Oliver Sim** *Hideous Bastard*, Young. ➤

Independents' Day

Indie record label market returns for 12th year

The *London Independent Label Market* returns on 16 July, with rarities and exclusive releases from a wealth of indie imprints. Among those taking part in the event – which includes DJ sets and art demonstrations – at Coal Drops Yard, Stable Street, King's Cross, are 4AD, ATA, AD 93, Airbag, Apron, BBE, Blitzcat, Because, Bella Union, Big Dada, Brace Yourself, Brownswood, Burning Witches, Cherry Red, Chess Club, Clap Trap, Clay Pipe, Cold Blow, Counter Intuitive, Dead Oceans, Dirty Hit, Do Your Best, Drag City, Dynamite Cuts, Earth, Erased Tapes, Everything Sucks, Far Out, Fat Possum, Fika, Fire, First Word, Gare Du Nord, Ghostly, Hand In Hive, Heavenly, Independent Musicians' Collective, Jagjaguwar, Kit, Late Night Tales, LTR, London Recordings, Matador, Material Music, Mexican Summer, Mukatsuku, Mute, Music Declares Emergency, Neolithic, Ninja Tune, Numero Group, Nonclassical, OTOROKU, Partisan, PIAS, Precious Recordings Of London, Psyche Tropes, Riddim Chango, Rough Trade, SA Recording, Sad Club, Secretly Canadian, Scratchy, Skep Wax, Slowdance, Slowfoot, Sonic Cathedral, Spinout Nuggets, Spiritmuse, State51, Sunday Best, Toto Taylor/The Campus, Time Capsule, Touchin' Bass, True Thoughts, Untitled, Upset The Rhythm, Wah Wah 45s, Wallen Bink and WIAIWYA.

See independentlabelmarket.com.

NFTs: the future?

Major labels prep NFT releases for later this year

In May, Limewire.com announced a partnership with the Universal record label to offer Non-fungible tokens from the likes of **The Weeknd** and **Drake**, including audio/visual content, images, backstage footage and artwork. The label has partnerships with other NFT platforms including Curionft.com and Snowcrash.com, the latter planning to issue **Bob Dylan** and **Miles Davis** NFTs. In addition, Warners has deals for NFTs with the **Quincy Jones**-backed Oneof.com, as well as blockparty.co. It plans NFTs by artists such as **Kenny Chesney** and **David Guetta**, while Sony has partnered with Snowcrash and makersplace.com.

On 9 May, Toto's **Steve Lukather**'s SLNFTCLUB.com offered unique NFTs and, on 20 May, **Julian Lennon** offered an audio-visual NFT featuring Extreme's **Nuno Bettencourt** via yellowheart.io. In addition, the **Jamiroquai** *LAND* virtual experience is due via sandbox.game. Other music NFT providers planning releases this year include **Richie Hawtin** & **Deadmau5**'s pixelynx.io, as well as fanaply.com, dropstar.org, market.singidea.com, onfuel.io, venicemusic.co, thegoda.io, app.RCRDSHP.com and FanTiger.com. Meantime, spotify.com trialled NFT sales by artists, including **The Wombats** and **Steve Aoki**, while **N-Dubz** plan to issue music NFTs later this year. Ironically, all this potential bubble of NFT activity comes at a time when *The Wall Street Journal* reported that global NFT sales dropped to 19,000 a month in May, compared to their peak of 225,000 a month in September 2021.

Bob Dylan NFTs due later this year

For more on NFTs, see forumnft.com. Have you bought music NFTs? If so, tell us about them via rc.editorial@metropolis.co.uk.

HELLO IT'S ME

Silent Running

Guitarist Peter Gamble on the UK rockers' first studio set in 32 years

How come you're back with a new album now?
We were asked to play our bassist Richard's wife's birthday in 2018, and I reluctantly agreed. It'd been a long time. To my amazement, I loved it. We started thinking, "Could we play a gig? Would anyone turn up?" We booked Belfast Voodoo club in June 2019, and fans from Scotland and England travelled. We sold out. That got the creative juices going, and I started writing. Lost Boy went down really well at our next Voodoo gig, and we thought, "Could we make an album?" The songs started flowing, and most are on the album. In October 2019, we returned to Novatech studio, and it felt very nostalgic, as it's where we demoed in the 80s. Wearing masks while recording was interesting, but we completed it in January.

What happened during the interregnum?
Most of the guys were busy musically, but I became totally disillusioned with the industry and concentrated on real-world jobs. Now I'm making up for lost time. It was a complete surprise that there was still a fanbase across Europe and, weirdly, I keep getting royalty cheques from Japan. I assume one of the songs was picked up as the theme tune for a Japanese TV show? If anyone knows, get in touch.

What's been the standout moment?
The first Voodoo gig was magical. I'm glad we videoed it. Very moving.

What was the hardest part about returning?
The mixing. Democracy in a band isn't easy.

Who's been the biggest inspiration along the way?
David Williams helped musically and technically. And the fans. This is for them.

What would a biopic's tag-line be?
No faith is blind.

What's next?
We're trying to master Spotify and build friendships and partnerships. It's important that people hear the album, so a tour is next, then a fifth album. We'll carry on as long as there's demand.

***Silent Running* Follow The Light, on Door, 22 July.**

Jazz

Art & Laurie Pepper *Straight Life: The Story Of* ***Art Pepper*** book, Canongate, 3 November. ■ **Louis Armstrong** *The Complete Satchmo Plays King Oliver*, **Stan Getz** *At Large* 2CDs, bonuses, AJC, 24 June. Due: June (17) **George Duke** *No Rhyme No Reason* 3CD, Soulmusic (24) **Lee Konitz** *The Complete 1956 Quartets*, **Stan Getz/Gerry Mulligan** *Getz Meets Mulligan In Hi-Fi*, EJC July (1) **Ray Brown** *The Early Albums Complete* 4CD, Enlightenment, **Duke Ellington** *Live At The Berlin Jazz Festival 1969-73*, The Lost Recordings, **John Zorn** *Olympiad Vol 2*, Tzadik (22) **Dexter Gordon** *The Complete Columbia Albums Collection* 7CD, Music On CD.

Metal

Righteous Fool, with **Reed Mullin**, **Mike Dean** (Corrosion Of Conformity), **Jason Browning** (Bad Brains), Ripple, 1 July. ■ **Soulfly** *Totem* CD, LP, gold LP, cassette, longbox CD/badge/sticker, Nuclear Blast, 5 August. ■ ***Iron Maiden**: The Official Colouring Book*, Fantoons, 19 July. ■ **Waysted** *Heroes Die Young: Vol 2*, bonuses, HNE, 29 July. ■ ***Primal Fear** Deluxe* CD, red, silver 2LPs, three bonuses, Atomic Fire, 15 July. ■ **Aptera** *You Can't Bury What Still Burns*, with **Sara Neidorf** (ex-Brian Jonestown Massacre), Ripple, 17 June. ■ The *Metal: Hellsinger* computer game is due via The Outsiders, with exclusive cuts by **Serj Tankian** (System Of A Down), **Matt Heafy** (Trivium), **Alissa White-Gluz** (Arch Enemy), **Randy Blythe** (Lamb Of God). ■ **Dio** *Holy Diver Super Deluxe* clear 2LP with remix, 4CD box adding unissued *Live At Selland Arena, Fresno, CA, 1983*, *Outtakes, Singles & B-Sides* (seven unissued), Rhino, 10 July. ■ **Flotsam & Jetsam** *Live From Phoenix* CD/DVD, July 2003, Wienerworld, 24 June. Due: June (24) **Stratovarius** *Fright Night*, Music On CD July (8) **Gruntruck** *Push*, Dissonance, **Black Label Society** *European Invasion Doom Troopin' Live* CD/BD, *Boozed, Broozed And Broken-Boned* DVD, BLS (22) Nile's **Karl Sanders** *Saurian Apocalypse*, Napalm August (5) ***Bullet For My Valentine***, Spinefarm September **Ozzy Osbourne**'s latest, [TBC] (2) **King's X**'s latest, InsideOut (23) **Therion** *Leviathan II*, [TBC].

Prog/Avant

...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead *XI: Bleed Here Now* CD, 2LP/CD, CD/BD Mediabook with 4.0 mix, InsideOut, 15 July. ■ **Stomu Yamashta** *Seasons* 7CD, bonuses, Cherry Red, 29 July. ■ **Children Of The Bong** *Sirius Sounds* 3CD, Planet Dog, 22 July. ■ **Esmerine** *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More* CD, 180g LP, with **Bruce Cawdron** (God Speed You! Black Emperor), Constellation, 5 August. ■ ***Storm Corrosion** 10th Anniversary Edition*, Dolby Atmos mix, bonuses, [TBC]. ■ Jeff Wagner *Destination Onward – The Story Of* ***Fates Warning*** book, FYI Press, 15 July. ■ **Coheed & Cambria** *Vaxis II: A Window Of The Waking Mind* LP, box with CD, lamp, hardback, poster, coheedandcambria.com, 24 June. ■ *Re-Sisters: The Lives And Recordings Of* ➤

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CELLULOID HEROES

Projects due include the upcoming **Josephine Baker** TV series, *De La Resistance*, with **Janelle Monae**, Ethan Coen's ***Jerry Lee Lewis:*** *Trouble In Mind* documentary film via A24; an authorised **Bob Marley** biopic via Paramount; a **Lil' Kim** biopic; Alison Elwood's **Cyndi Lauper** *Let The Canary Sing* documentary film via Sony; Jeremy Zag's animated musical, *Melody*, with voicing by **Katy Perry**; Netflix's *Kung Fu Panda: The Dragon Knight* animation series with voicing by **Rita Ora**; Ben Waisbren's **Laura Nyro** documentary film via Vistas Media; Rob Reiner's *This Is* ***Spinal Tap*** *II* reunion film via Castle Rock, in 2024; Lisa Cortes' ***Little Richard:*** *I Am Everything* documentary film via CNN Films/HBO Max, which also has Doug Pray's **Lizzo** documentary film; Ethan Silverman's *Angelheaded Hipster: The Songs Of* ***Marc Bolan & T.Rex*** documentary film, with **U2**, **Elton John**, **David Bowie**, **Ringo Starr**, **Nick Cave**, **Joan Jett**, **Billy Idol**, **Joe Elliott** (Def Leppard), **Lucinda Williams**, **Beth Orton**, **Maria McKee**, **Snarky Puppy**, **Macy Gray**, **Father John Misty**, **Devendra Banhart**, **Nena** Q&As, premiering at New York *Tribeca Film Festival*, 8-19 June, then via BMG, while Eve Brandstein/Richard Kaufman/Stuart Samuels' *The Lost Weekend: A Love Story* **John Lennon** documentary film premieres there, as does Eliane Henri's **Roy Hargrove** documentary film, *Hargrove*, with Q&As from **Herbie Hancock**, **Sonny Rollins**, **Robert Glasper**, **Erykah Badu**, **Questlove** (The Roots), **Yasiin Bey** (Mos Def); RJ Cutler's *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* **Elton John** documentary film, with unaired archive footage/new Q&As, via Disney+, 20 November; ***Dolly Parton****'s Mountain Magic Christmas* TV special, via US NBC; Dennis Lehane's *Black Bird* series on Apple TV+ from 8 July, with new music by **Mogwai**; Claire Denis' *Stars At Noon* film via RT/Curiosa, with soundtrack by **Tindersticks**; Florian Zeller's *The Son* film, via Sony by Christmas, with **Hans Zimmer** soundtrack; Stelana Kliris' upcoming *The Islander* film, with new music from **Harry Connick Jr**; Roman Polanski's *The Palace* film, via Eliseo in 2023, with soundtrack by **Alexandre Desplat**; Rudy Valdez's **Santana** documentary film, with unaired archive footage, via Imagine/Sony; the *North Star* film, with music by U2's **Bono** and **The Edge**.

KIT & CABOODLE

Alice In Chains' **Jerry Cantrell** has Les Paul Custom and Les Paul Custom Prophecy guitars out via Epiphone; Guns N' Roses' **Richard Fortus** has two G6636-RF guitars out via Gretsch; Megadeth's **Dave Mustaine** has a Songwriter acoustic guitar out via Gibson, while an Explorer Bird guitar from Halestorm's **Lzzy Hale** is due, along with a **Noel Gallagher** ES-355 guitar in August; a **Johnny Marr** Fever Dreams Yellow Jaguar signature guitar is due via Fender.

ACOUSTIC

August **Bob Hillary** *Sacred*, producer Matt Butler (The Rolling Stones), Absolute October (21) **Alice Boman** *The Space Between*, producer Patrik Berger (Robyn), PIAS.

INDIE

June (24) ***Social Animals***, co-producers John Rausch (Taylor Swift), Jeremy Hitcher (Harry Styles), Rise, **Caamp** *Lavender Days*, co-producer Beatriz Artola (Adele), Mom + Pop September (23) **Courting** *Guitar Music* CD, LP, cassette, 2CD with *Demos*, 2CD with *Stolen Sessions*, 2CD with *Live At Supersonic Paris*, producer James Dring (Blur), PIAS 2023 **Sunday State**'s latest, co-producers Colin Hegna (Brain Jonestown Massacre), Jeff Saltzman (Blitzen Trapper), [TBC].

JAZZ

July (8) **Anna Butterss** (Phoebe Bridgers) *Activities*, Colorfield.

METAL

July (22) **Fame On Fire** *Welcome To The Chaos* CD, orange LP, co-producer Brian Howes (Halestorm), Hopeless.

POP

August (26) **They Kiss** *Feeling With you*, co-producer Mikalai Skrobat (Kanye West), [TBC].

POST/PUNK

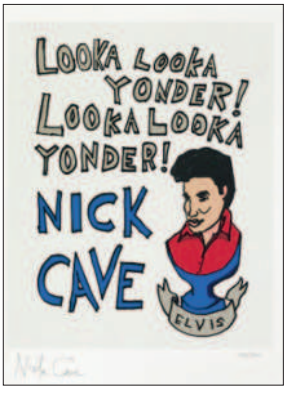
26 August **The Lounge Society** *Tired Of Liberty*, producer Dan Carey (Fontaines DC), Speedy Wunderground.

Alice In Chains' Jerry Cantrell: signature models

Pictures At An Exhibition

Artwork, photos and ephemera on public display

The *Always On My Mind* charity art exhibition, with works by **James Johnston** (Gallon Drunk), **Francis Macdonald** (Teenage Fanclub), **Nick Cave**, **Billy Childish** (also offering two exclusive prints), is at Fitzrovia Gallery, Whitfield Street, London, 27-30 July. ■ On 13 May, Philadelphia Historical Commission voted for protected status to a house at 5626, Morton Street, Philadelphia, aka the Arkestral Institute Of **Sun Ra**. It's protected from future development and remains the abode of **Sun Ra Arkestra** members, notably **Marshall Allen**, who's lived there since 1968. ■ The **Bob Dylan** Centre, Tulsa, Oklahoma, with 100,000-plus items, opened 10 May. ■ Hard Rock hotels in Ibiza and Tenerife have displays of **David Bowie** *Ziggy Stardust*-era artefacts through 2022, including, at the latter, contract, posters, guitar. ■ The *Opry Loves The 90s* exhibition is at Grand Ole Opry, Nashville, to 31 December. It has stage clothing/props from **Clint Black**, **Garth Brooks**, **Terri Clark**, **Alan Jackson**, **Martina McBride**, **Reba McEntire**, **Lorrie Morgan**, **Marty Stuart**, **Travis Tritt**, **Trisha Yearwood**. ■ On 20 May, the *Downhome Music: Iberville And The Surrounding Parishes* exhibition of rare vinyl opened at Iberville Museum, Main Street, Plaquemine, Louisiana.



Nick Cave: silk-screen canvas on show

Prog/Avant

Delia Derbyshire hardback, CD audiobook, *Limited Edition* book with extras, Faber, 18 August. ■ Mark Rodriguez *After All Is Said And Done: Taping The* ***Grateful Dead*** *1965-95* book, Thames & Hudson, 22 September. ■ King Crimson's **Robert Fripp** *God Save The Queen/Under Heavy Manners* 200g LP, CD with two bonuses (one unissued), *Let The Power Fall* 200g LP, CD with three bonuses, Panegyric, 1 July. Due: June (17) **Anathema** *Universal*, **The Pineapple Thief** *Where We Stood* CD/BD, Kscope, **Greenslade** *Live In Stockholm*, Cleopatra (24) **St Vincent** *Is At The Nowhere Inn* DVD, Wienerworld, Air's **JB Dunckel** *Carbon*, Prototyp, **Tangerine Dream** *The Gate Of Saturn*, Cleopatra July Mellow Candle's **Alison O'Donnell** *Hark The Voice That Sings For All*, [TBC] (1) **Bill Bruford's Earthworks** *A Part Yet Apart*, Summerfold (8) **Genesis** *Sum Of The Parts* CD/DVD, earMUSIC (29) **The Gathering** *Nighttime Birds*, *Mandylion*, MDD August (26) Dead Can Dance's **Lisa Gerrard/Marcello De Francisci** *Exaudia*, Atlantic Curve 2023 **Shakti**'s latest, [TBC].

Pop+

Madonna: No 1s

Peter Jackson's TV series, ***The Beatles:*** *Get Back*, 3DVD, with 5.1 mix, 3BD, 7.1, Dolby Atmos, Walt Disney Studios, 12 July. ■ **Madonna** *Finally Enough Love: 50 Number Ones* 16-track CD; 180g 2LP, one unissued; 50-track 3CD, 180g 3LP/red 180g LP, five unissued, Warners, 19 August. ■ **Swing Out Sister** *Blue Mood, Breakout & Beyond: The Early Years Pt 1* 8CD, with *It's Better To Travel*, *Kaleidoscope World*, *Get In Touch With Yourself*, *Live At The Jazz Café*, 15-track *B-Sides* CDs, 37-track *Remixes* 3CD, Cherry Pop, 29 July. ■ **Kool & The Gang** *The Albums Vol 1* 13CD, 17 June, *Vol 2* 11CD, 5 August, Edsel. ■ **Shakespears Sister** *Hormonally Yours 30th Anniversary* white, splatter LPs; CD/DVD/book, unissued footage, three bonuses; 75-track 7CD/signed photo box, London, 19 August. ■ **JCRS** *Arclight*, with **John Crawford** (Berlin), **Robin Simon** (Ultravox), [TBC]. ■ **5 Seconds Of Summer** *Me, Myself & I* CD, *Deluxe* CD with bonuses, BMG, 23 September. ■ **Michael Jackson** *Thriller 40th Anniversary* 2CD, unissued demos, shopmichaeljackson.com, 15 November, SACD, Mobile Fidelity, 18 November. ■ The Roots' **Questlove** *Music Is History* book, Abrams, 10 November. ■ **Mylene Farmer** *Anamorphosee* box, with 2LP, CD, 5 x 7", instrumentals, Blue Wrasse, 17➤

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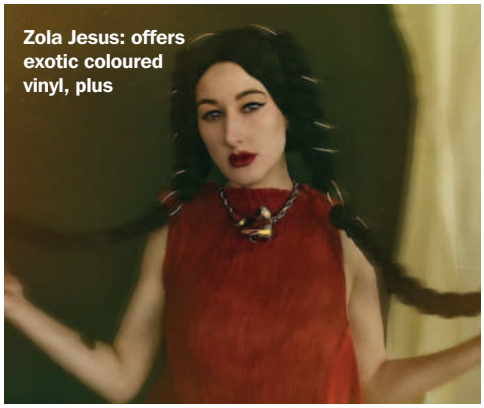
Noteworthy guest-spots this month

Avantasia *A Paranormal Evening With The Moonflower Society*, Nuclear Blast, [TBC]: Ralf Scheepers (Primal Fear).
Jimmie Allen *Tulip Drive*, BMG, 24 June: **Jennifer Lopez**.
The Afghan Whigs *How Do We Begin?*, Royal Cream, 9 September: **Mark Lanegan** (QOTSA).
Absinthe Green *Of Love And Pain*, [TBC]: **Snowy Shaw** (King Diamond).
The Black Feathers *Angel Dust & Cyanide*, The Black Feathers, 8 July: **Will McFarlane** (Bonnie Raitt), **Dan Moore** (Massive Attack).
Jeremy Cunningham/Dustin Laurenzi/Paul Bryan *A Better Ghost*, Northern Spy, 29 July: **Jay Bellerose** (Aimee Mann).
Cats In Space *Kickstart The Sun* red, yellow LPs, *Super Deluxe* 2CD, 10 bonuses, Cargo, 29 July: **BJ Cole** (The Walker Brothers), **The Duchess** (Space Elevator).
Cuco *Fantasy Gateway*, Interscope, 22 July: **Kacey Musgraves**.
Classless Act *Welcome To The Show* CD, coloured LP, cassette, Better Noise, 24 June: **Vince Neil** (Mötley Crüe).
Calypso Rose *Forever*, Because, 26 August: **Manu Chao**, **Carlos Santana**.
Danger Mouse/Black Thought *Cheat Codes*, BMG, 12 August: **A$AP Rocky**, **Run The Jewels**, **MF Doom**, **Michael Kiwanuka**, **Joey Bada$$**, **Raekwon**.
Dead Fucking Serious *Klandemic*, bandcamp.com, 14 June: **Lou Koller** (Sick Of It All), **Efram Schulz** (Death By Stereo).
Dr John *Things Happen That Way*, Rounder, 23 September: **Willie Nelson**, **Lukas Nelson**, **Aaron Neville**.
Early James *Strange Time To Be Alive*, Easy Eye, 19 August: **Tom Bukovac** (Willie Nelson), **Jay Bellerose** (Aimee Mann).
Edenbridge *Shangri-La* 2CD, green 2LP, box with 2CD, poster, keychain, bum-bag, AFM, 26 August: **Erik Martensson** (Eclipse).
Stefan Grossman *Live At The BBC* 4CD, Repertoire, 8 July: **John Renbourn**, **Jo-Ann Kelly**.
Goon *Hour Of Green Evening*, Fader, 15 July: **Alex Fischel** (Spoon).
Nathan Gray & Iron Roses *Rebel Songs*, Iodine, 22 July: **Tim McIlrath** (Rise Against).
Blue Cheer's Randy Holden *Population III*, Riding Easy, 1 July: **Randy Pratt** (Cactus), **Bobby Rondinelli** (ex-Black Sabbath).
Hydra *Point Break*, Frontiers, 5 August: **Daniel Flores** (The Murder Of My Sweet).
Imperial Triumphant *Spirit Of Ecstasy*, Century Media, 22 July: **Snake** (Voivod), **Alex Skolnick** (Testament), **Trey Spruance** (Mr Bungle), **Kenny G**.
Dennis Johnson *Revelation*, dennisjohnsonslide.com, 15 July: **Anton Fig** (Joe Bonamassa), **Bob Fridzema** (Walter Trout).
Freedy Johnston *Back On The Road To You*, 40 Below, 9 September: **Susanna Hoffs** (The Bangles), **Doug Pettibone** (Lucinda Williams), **Dusty Wakeman** (Jim Lauderdale), **Dave Raven** (Shelby Lynn), **Aimee Mann**, **Susan Cowsill**.
Julia Jacklin *PRE PLEASURE* CD, LP, Polyvinyl, 26 August: **Ben Whitely**, **Will Kidman** (The Weather Station).
Kill Shelter *Asylum* CD, LP, Manic Depression, 15 July: **Ronny Moorings** (Clan Of Xymox).
Mura Masa *Demon Time*, Polydor, 16 September: **Pa Salieu**, **Skillibeng**, **Lil Uzi Vert**, **PinkPantheress**.
Miszczyk *Thyrsis Of Etna*, We Are Time, 15 July: **Laetitia Sadier** (Stereolab).
Ex-Noah & The Whale's Matt Owens *Beer For The Horses*, Urby, 21 October: **Geoff Widdowson** (Danny & The Champs).
Spock's Beard's Ryo Okumoto *The Myth Of The Mostrophus* 2LP, red 2LP, CD, InsideOut, 29 July: colleagues **Al Morse**, **Dave Meros**, **Ted Leonard**, **Jimmy Keegan**, plus **Michael Sadler** (Saga), **Mike Keneally** (Steve Vai), **Jonathan Mover** (Joe Satriani), **Marc Bonilla** (Keith Emerson), **Doug Wimbish** (Living Colour), **Randy McStine** (Porcupine Tree), **Lyle Workman** (Todd Rundgren), **Steve Hackett**.
Restless Spirits *Second To None*, Frontiers, 5 August: **Tony Hernando** (Lords Of Black), **Kenny Hilli** (Giant), **Deen Castronovo** (ex-Journey), **Johnny Gioeli**, **Alessandro Del Vecchio** (Hardline).
Antonio Sanchez *SHIFT (Bad Hombre Vol II)*, Arts Music, 26 August: **Trent Reznor**, **Atticus Ross** (NIN), **Rodrigo Y Gabriela**, **Dave Matthews**, **Pat Metheny**.
Spiral Stairs *Medley Attack!!!*, Amazing Grease, 8 July: **Matt Harris** (The Posies), **Kelley Stoltz** (ex-Echo & The Bunnymen).
Thun *II*, Eat Lead & Die, 1 July: **Karl Sanders** (Nile).
Twiddle *Every Last Leaf*, No Coincidence, 12 August: **John Popper** (Blues Traveler).
Unloved *The Pink Album* 2LP, Heavenly, 2 September: **Jarvis Cocker**, **Jon Spencer**.
Marc Valentine *Future Obscure*, Arcane Wires, 8 July: **Matt Dangerfield** (The Boys).
Ozric Tentacles' Ed Wynne *Tumbling Through The Floativerse* CD, LP, blue LP, Kscope, 15 July 2022: colleague **Silas Neptune**.
Yours Truly's latest, UNFD, 2023: **Josh Franceschi** (You Me At Six).
Yasushi Ide *Cosmic Suite2 企画書* CD, LP, Grand Gallery, 24 June: **James Chance** (Blondie), **DJ Krush**, **Don Letts**, Tony Allen, **Afrika Bambaataa**.
Tapper Zukie *Bunker Buster* CD, LP, Kingston Sounds, 15 July: **Horace Andy**, **Junior Reid**, **Michael Rose** (ex-Black Uhuru).
Zola Jesus *Arkhon* CD, cassette, tan, eco-mix, red, white, white-brown, red-grey, blue LPs, Sacred Bones, 24 June.



Zola Jesus: offers exotic coloured vinyl, plus

Purple days

Immersive **Prince** experience opens its doors in Chicago

The ***Prince**: The Immersive Experience* launched at The Shop At North Bridge, North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, on 9 June, and runs to 9 October. It features 10 areas in which visitors can take in various aspects of Prince's life, his creative journey, and his music. This includes a peek inside the *Purple Rain* album sleeve, and its genesis, a walk through a reproduction of his Paisley Park Studio A, complete with interactive mixing desk, and an audio-visual dancefloor. Personal clothing is on display, along with photos and instruments.

See princetheexperience.com;* The Gold Experience*, Sony, 17 June.

Prince: personal items on show

Photo (Prince): Steve Parke

Pop+

June. Due: June **The Fizz** *Everything Under The Sun*, [TBC] (17) **Sigma** *Hope*, Virgin, **The Monkees** *Live! Summer Tour* 2CD/DVD, **Duran Duran** *Girls On Film 1979 Demo*, Cleopatra (24) **The Beatles** *Live At The Star Club Hamburg Germany 1962*, Greyscale, **Shakatak** *The Ultimate Chill Album*, Secret July (8) **Big Star** *Complete Third* 3CD, Omnivore (15) **Mabel** *About Last Night…*, Polydor August (12) **The Bluetones** *Superior Quality Recordings 20023-10* 4CD, Edsel, The Beach Boys' **Al Jardine** *A Postcard From California*, Universal October **Betty Boo**'s latest, via Betty Boo TBC **Sky Ferreira** *Masochism*, [TBC].

Post-/Punk

Dave Simpson ***Sex Pistols**: I Wanna Be Me* book, Palazzo, 15 September. ■ Jon Savage/Stuart Baker *Punk 45* book, Thames & Hudson, 27 October. Due: June (24) **Wire** *Not About To Die*, Pinkflag, **Redd Kross** *Neurotica*, Merge, **The Psychedelic Furs** *Made Of Rain*, Cooking Vinyl.

Rock

Mickey Jupp's first set in 40 years, *Up Snakes, Down Ladders*, Conquest, 29 July. ■ **Elmer Gantry's Velvet Opera** *Long Nights Of Summer* 3CD, bonuses, Grapefruit, 22 July. ■ **Sting** *The Bridge* 16-track 180g 2LP, clear 180g 2LP, 19-track 2CD, with *FIP Sessions Live In Paris At The Pantheon*, Polydor, 17 June. ■ **Phil Lynott** *Songs For While I'm Away*/ **Thin Lizzy** *Live At The Sydney Opera House October 1978* CD/2DVD; CD/DVD/BD, remixes, five bonuses, Mercury Studios, 24 June. ■ **Bono** *Surrender* book Alfred A Knopf, 1 November. ■ Iman Kakai-Lazell *'Dark **Mark' Lanegan*** book, Moochin' About, 30 September. ■ **Joan Armatrading** *Key*, Music On CD, 17 June, *The Weakness In Me* book, Faber, 3 November. ■ **Lessmann/Voss** *Rock Is Our Religion*, with **Michael Voss** (ex-Mad Max), Atomic Fire, 22 July. ■ **The Vague Ideas** *New York Letters*, with **Mare Rozelle** (Johnny Bravo), Trouserphonic, 18 June. ■ **The Gun Club** *The Las Vegas Story* 2LP; 2CD/DVD, New York Rochester Scorgie's, August 1984, *Home Movie*, Blixa Sounds, 17 June. ■ **Imagine Dragons** *Mercury Deluxe* 2CD, 18 bonuses, Mercury, 1 July. ■ **Jimmy Barnes** *Soul Deep Deluxe* gold 2LP, four bonuses, box adding CD/DVD, five postcards, Mushroom, 24 June. ■ **Nordic Union** *Animalistic* CD, green 180g LP, with **Ronnie Atkins** (Pretty Maids), **Erik Martensson** (Eclipse), **Sunstorm** *Brothers In Arms* CD, clear 180g LP, with **Ronnie Romero** (Rainbow), **Luca Princiotta** (Doro), **Alessandro Del Vecchio** (Hardline), **Vanden Plas** *Live & Immortal* gold 180g 2LP, CD/DVD, BD, Kaiserslauten, Germany, December 2016, Frontiers, 5 August. Due: June (17) **Alanis Morissette** *The Storm Before The Calm*, Sony, **Collective Soul** *Disciplined Breakdown* 2CD, Concord, ***The Deviants***, Music On CD (24) **Fu Manchu** *No One Rides For Free*, At The Dojo, **Ousey/Mann** *Is Anybody Listening?*, Escape, **Maggie Bell** *Live At The Rainbow 1974*, Repertoire, John's Children's **Andy Ellison** *Wall To Wall*, Easy Action, **Black** ➤

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Rock continued

Oak Arkansas *The Knowbody Else*, Cleopatra July (8) **Nelson** *Greatest Hits (And Near Misses)*, Universal, **Aerosmith** *Rock For The Rising Sun*, **Bruce Springsteen** *Springsteen & I* CD/DVDs, CD/BDs, earMUSIC, **Blue October** *Sway*, Up Down, **Allman Brothers Band** *Enlightened Rogues*, Music On CD (22) ex-Thin Lizzy's **Snowy White** *Driving On The 44*, Soulfood (29) ***XYZ***, Music On CD October (14) **Alter Bridge** *Pawns & Kings*, Napalm December (30) **Eric Clapton** *Unplugged* SACD, Mobile Fidelity TBC Europe's **John Norum** *Gone To Stay*, [TBC] 2023 **The Answer**'s latest, Golden Robot.

Soundtracks

June (17) **Johnny Pate** *Brother On The Run*, Octave (24) **Miklos Rosza** *Sodom & Gomorrah*, Banda Sonora July (15) **Sorcery** *Stunt Rock*, RidingEasy.

Vintage

Frank Sinatra *Sinatra's Swingin' Session!!!/A Swingin' Affair!*, bonuses, EJC, 24 June. ■ Fred Rothwell's *Dynamite! – **Ike Turner**'s Recorded Legacy* book, Music Mentor, [TBC]. Due: June (17) **Orson Welles** *The Very Best Of* 2CD, Cleopatra July (15) **Elvis Presley** *Something For Everybody*, *The Forgotten Album*, LMLR.

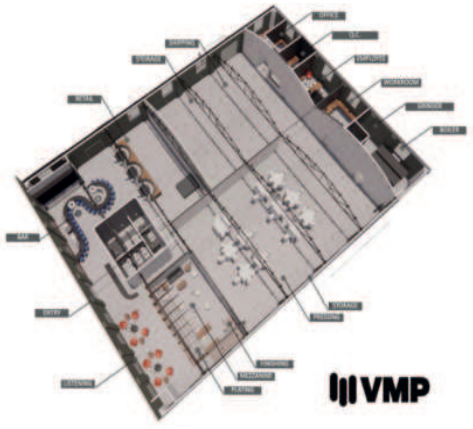
Got any news? Send it to tim.jones@metropolis.co.uk

The only way is up

US vinyl sales and pressing capacity increase

The Vinyl Me, Please label announced on 25 April that a 14,000 sq ft record pressing plant will be operational by Christmas in the River North Art District, Detroit, including observation and listening rooms. VMP pressing chief, Gary Salstrom, said, "I'm thrilled to have the resources and partners required to make the best vinyl LPs ever produced, in a place where the experience will be as special as the finished goods". Company CEO, Cameron Schaefer, added, "We've decided to press records in a way that provides an incredible experience for our customers and visitors to our plant… We want this facility to be a game-changer in an industry that has too often been focused on quantity over quality. Not only will the atmosphere of our pressing plant provide an unprecedented experience for guests, the new addition will allow VMP to grow our mission, provide our customers with the kind of quality that we've become known for at a greater scale, and produce the highest quality records possible." ■ On 5 May, Music Watch Inc asserted that a survey of 1,400 US consumers indicated that 18 million people aged 13-plus had bought a new vinyl record during 2021, up 27% on 2020. It estimated that 56% of them were male, 44% female, 47% under 25, and 95% stated that they would buy new vinyl during 2022.

See vinylmeplease.com, livstudio.net, musicwatchinc.com.



Architectural plan for the new VMP plant

Yes, proggers unite

Collection of standards by prog standard-bearers

Yes's **Billy Sherwood** has overseen another of his star-packed sets, due this month. The 10-track set of rock and prog tracks sees reinterpretations by his colleagues, **Geoff Downes** and **Jon Davison**, ex-Yes's **Patrick Moraz**, and his own cut alongside **David Sancious** (E Street Band). Other contributors include **David Clayton-Thomas** (Blood, Sweat & Tears), **Rod Argent** (The Zombies), **Sonja Kristina** (Curved Air), **Candice Night** (Blackmore's Night), **Ron 'Bumblefoot' Thal** (ex-Guns N' Roses), **Steve Morse** (Deep Purple), **Martin Barre** (Jethro Tull), **Steve Hillage** (Gong), **Roine Stolt** (The Flower Kings), **Jeff 'Skunk' Baxter** (Steely Dan), **Rosalie Cunnigham** (ex-Purson), **Martin Turner** (ex-Wishbone Ash), **Jerry Goodman** (Mahavishnu Orchestra), **Dweezil Zappa**.

Prog Collective* The Songs We Were Taught *CD, purple LP are on Purple Pyramid, 1 July.

Yes, cap'n: Billy Sherwood steers another prog voyage

Hands of God

All-star tribute to **Eric Clapton** due

A 12-track homage to **Eric Clapton** is due on coloured vinyl and CD in June. It features **Kirk Fletcher** (The Fabulous Thunderbirds), **Brian Auger**, **Sammy Kershaw**, **Albert Lee**, **Arthur Brown**, **James Williamson** (The Stooges), **Rat Scabies** (The Damned), **Doug Pinnick** (King's X), **Eric Gales**, **Jack Russell** (Great White), **Sonny Landreth**, **Oli Brown**, **Molly Hatchet**, **Pat Travers**, **David Sancious** (E Street Band), **Artimus Pyle** (Lynyrd Skynyrd), **Mark Lindsay** (Paul Revere & The Raiders), **Rick Nielsen** (Cheap Trick), **Shirley King** (BB King), **Martin Barre** (Jethro Tull), **Snowy White** (ex-Thin Lizzy), **Ana Popovic**, **Graham Bonnet**.

A Tribute To Eric Clapton *CD, gold LP are on Cleopatra, 17 June, Eric Clapton* Unplugged *SACD, Mobile Fidelity, 30 December.*

Sunshine of their love: for Eric

Taking the Mickey

Toni Basil wins rights to reissue her 1982 hit

Toni Basil's No 2 UK hit and pop standard, Mickey, was subject to a US court judgement by the Ninth Circuit court of appeal in May. The singer, **Antonia Basilotta**, had taken the Stillwater record label to court, aiming to use US copyright legislation that allows for the transfer of rights after 35 years to performers and producers, in order to reclaim songs from her 1981 *Word Of Mouth* album, as well as other period recordings.

Stillwater claimed that it was entitled to some of the song rights, arguing that producer Greg Mathieson had had a hand in their creation. However, the appeal court judgement found in favour of Basil, noting that "Stillwater has not proved joint authorship by a preponderance of the evidence." Further, it had "produced little evidence that Mathieson exercised control" when Mickey was made, instead offering only a "vague description of Mathieson's role as a producer." It added that presenting "someone who only occasionally witnessed Mathieson performing that role is inadequate to prove that Mathieson was a creative mastermind behind the recordings rather than someone who was, for instance, mixing the tapes largely at Basilotta's direction, consistent with her creative vision." Hence, the court concluded that, "Basilotta appears to have primarily wielded creative control, selecting songs and instrumental musicians, devising the creative concepts for recordings, and even helping Mathieson mix the master tapes." As a result, she regained control over Mickey and other recordings from that time, opening up the possibility for future reissues as she sees fit.

Toni Basil: wins over her Mickey

On the US Ninth Circuit court, ca9.uscourts.gov.

Photos: Livstudio.net; (Billy Sherwood) Gottlieb Bros

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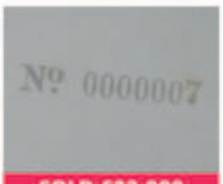

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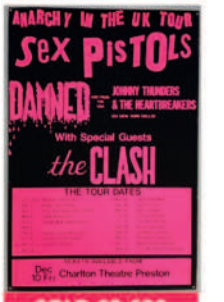

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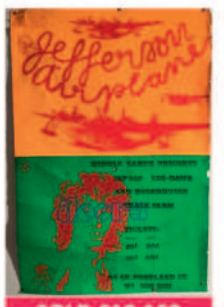

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Beam them up: early 70s Faust, with Jean-Hervé, far right

PACT MAN

Faust bassist Jean-Hervé Péron on the krautrockers' latest vinyl

Tell us how the LPs came about.
Faust was born in April 1971, so 2021 was the 50th anniversary. Gunther Buskies, of Bureau B, in Hamburg, decided to issue the 1,000-copy *Faust 1971-1974* LP and CD boxes, and follow them with a new studio LP.

Did it take long to get the vinyl done?
Indeed. The Covid pandemic made things difficult, and communication within Faust wasn't optimal. For the box, Gunther had to change his plans and see what unreleased material could be extracted, remixed and remastered. The booklet design took time, and the manufacturing plants had difficulties.
I have a large amount of original tapes, while the other members didn't, or didn't manage to pass them to Gunther. I spent a week listening in real time to all the original ¼" and 2" tapes, while they were being digitised. Then, I flew to Naples and, with Amaury Cambuzat, we made rough mixes, and submitted them to Gunther and the other members of Faust. Once we all agreed on the concept and on selected pieces, Amaury mixed and mastered them. I participated in the making of the booklet, featuring spontaneous impressions of witnesses, rather than intellectual analysis of our music. Now I know better what we did from April 1971 to May 1974.

"THE COVID PANDEMIC MADE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR THE MANUFACTURING PLANTS"

Were there any amusing episodes during the process?
Jennifer, from *Faust IV*, is popular in the fan community. It was recorded at Virgin's studio, The Manor. I wanted to find out who was the young, red-haired Jennifer, who inspired Rudolf Sosna to write the song. It took a while and involved churches, schools and a village history association, to track down the lady, and to find out that her real name was June. But her sister *was* Jennifer. Go figure.

Is there anything else unissued in your archive?
I'm fairly sure that there are more tapes that didn't get digitised, and Bureau B will release *Moment Aufnahme I* and *II* .

Faust* 1971-1974 *box sets and* Punkt *LP, CD are on Bureau B.

FIRST SPIN

Readers' virgin vinyl purchases

This month: Cream I Feel Free/N.S.U.

During my very irregular visits to Woolworths, I had accumulated a small collection of Embassy Records' cover versions of chart 45s – my favourite being a decent stab at Jet Harris and Tony Meehan's Diamonds. But my first "proper" record was an unexpected present from my father who had been attending a training course in far-off London. No idea why he chose I Feel Free, it wasn't his type of music, but it opened up a whole new music horizon to me. During the next few weeks, I played that 45 over and over, both the A- and B-side, and then it dawned on me that I was playing N.S.U. more than I Feel Free. With N.S.U. you get glimpses of the future: the near-tribal drumming, soulful vocals, electrifying guitar solos and intricate basslines. This one single shaped my taste in music. I immediately started saving my pocket money to buy the album *Fresh Cream*.

Jon Hawkins

Liars: recycled reissues coming

UPCOMING VINYL RELEASES

Wu-Tang Clan *Wu-Tang Forever* box, with 4LP, silver 7", slipcased double-cassette, book, Get On Down, 29 July.
IQ *Subterranea* orange, red, blue 3LP have pre-orders via iq-hq.co.uk.
Redd Kross *Neurotica* orange, turquoise 2LP, CD, 12 unissued, Merge, 24 June.
Slash Feat Myles Kennedy & The Conspirators *Live At Studios 60* 2LP, four bonuses, Gibson, 18 June.
Queen *The Platinum Collection* orange, red, pink, purple, blue, green 6LP, EMI, 17 June.
Dire Straits *Money For Nothing* 2LP, two bonuses (one unissued), EMI, 17 June.
The Cat's Miaow *Songs 94-98* LP/7", one unissued, World Of Echo, 15 July.
Liars *They Threw Us All In A Trench And Stuck A Monument On Top* recycled LP, 22 July, Mute, followed by Christmas by *They Were Wrong, So We Drowned* recycled LP.
Rostam *Discovery* coloured LP, with bonus, bandcamp.com, 28 October.
Ella Fitzgerald unissued *Ella At The Hollywood Bowl* LP, yellow LP, CD, Verve, 24 June.
Yutaka Hirose's unissued *Trace* 2LP, WRWTFWW, 1 July.
Beastie Boys *Check Your Head* 180g 4LP, 16 bonuses, shopuk. beastieboys.com, 15 July.
The National's **Matt Berninger** *Serpentine Prison Deluxe* green 2LP, six bonuses, Concord, 8 July.
The 242-track *For The Birds: The Birdsong Project* charity 20LP, including **Nick Cave & Warren Ellis**, **Beck**, **Karen Elson**, **Michael Rother & Vittoria Maccabruni**, My Morning Jacket's **Jim James**, **Mark Ronson**, **Damon Albarn & Wale**, **UNKLE**, **Richard Reed Parry** (Arcade Fire), **Terry Riley**, ex-Sonic Youth's **Lee Ranaldo**, **Kurt Vile**, **Jarvis Cocker**, **Karen O** (Yeah Yeah Yeahs), Duran Duran's **Nick Rhodes & Wendy Bevan**, Downtown, 12 September.
That Petrol Emotion *Babble Expanded* 2LP, blue 2LP, bonuses, Last Night From Glasgow, 24 June.
Live At Womad 1982 2LP/poster, 2CD, **Echo & The Bunnymen**, **Peter Gabriel**, **Simple Minds**, **The Beat** unissued cuts, Real World, 29 July.
Josef K *The Only Fun In Town* 2LP, gold 2LP, with bonuses, CD with 12-track *Sorry For Laughing*, Les Disques Du Crepuscule, 15 July.
Alan Parsons Project *I, Robot* 180g LP box, *Eye In The Sky* 45rpm 180g 2LP have pre-orders via mofi.com.
Duet Emmo *Or So It Seems* orange, white 2LPs, CD, with bonus, Mute, 19 August.
Neil Young *Toast* 2LP, CD, three unissued, Reprise, 8 July.
Chastain *The Voice Of The Cult* blue LP, CD, two bonuses, Shadow Kingdom, 29 July.
Congregation Of Drones *Twenty Twenty* 2LP, with **Pauline Kim Harris** (Jeff Beck), bandcamp.com, 1 July.
Seether *Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum* coloured 3LP, 2CD, 11 bonuses (five unissued), Fantasy, 1 July.

17 June **Hans Zimmer & Henry Jackman** *Henri 4* coloured 180g 2LP, **Silverchair** *Frogstomp* clear 180g 2LP, **Suicidal Tendencies** *Join The Army* 180g LP, **Magma** *Wurdha Itah* purple 180g LP, **Shuggie Otis** *Here Comes* copper 180g LP, Dream Theater's **James LaBrie** *Static Impulse* 180g LP, Music On Vinyl; **The Crystal Method** *The Trip Out* LP, Ultra; Haken's **Charlie Griffiths** *Tiktaalika* 180g 2LP/CD, CD, InsideOut; **The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band** *Vol 2* purple LP, Jackpot, *Vol 3* turquoise LP, Sundazed; **Blitzen Trapper** *All Across The Land* coloured LP, Vagrant; **Joey Bada$$** *2000* LP, CD, Columbia; **Chuck Berry** *The Father Of Rock* 2LP, Wagram; **Metallica** *Garage Inc* blue 3LP, *Load* orange-brown 2LP, *Reload* orange 2LP, *St Anger* orange-red 2LP, *Death Magnetic* silver 2LP, walmart.com; **Bruno Mars** *Unorthodox Jukebox* red LP, Atlantic; **Robben Ford** *Lost In Paris Blues Band* 2LP, earMUSIC; **Chain Reaction** *Indebted To You* 180g LP, Soulgramma; **Acid Mothers Temple & The Cosmic Inferno** *Pink Lady Lemonade* clear 2LP, Riot Season; **Asha Puthli** *The Essential* LP, Phonica; The Style Council's **Chris Bangs/Mick Talbot** *Back To Business* LP, CD, Acid Jazz; **Jerry Goldsmith** *Seconds OST* clear LP, Quartet; **Neneh Cherry** *The Versions* LP, EMI; **Perfume Genius** *Ugly Season* LP, CD, Matador; **Raven** *All For One* coloured LP, Culture Factory; **Thelonious Monk** *The Unique*, *The Prophet* clear LPs, Destination Moon; **Goldie** *Timeless* 3LP, London; **The Wannadies** *Vasterbotten* LP, CD, Startracks; **Brad Mehldau Trio** *Jacob's Ladder* 2LP, CD, Nonesuch; **Five Finger Death Punch** *American Capitalist* coloured LP, Better Noise; **Thrice** *To Be Everywhere Is To Be Nowhere* orange LP, CD, Hassle; **Arrested Development** *For The FKN Love* 2LP, Wienerworld; **Morbid Angel** *Blessed Are The Sick* LP, Earache; **John Holt** *3000 Volts Of Holt* LP, Radiation Roots; **Ut** *Griller* LP, CD, Out; **Serge Gainsbourg** *Premiers Tubes* LP, Diggers Factory; **William Shatner** *Rocket Man* silver LP, **Quiet Riot** *All And Well* coloured 2LP, Cleopatra.

24 June *Wonder Woman OST* pink 180g 2LP, **Meat Loaf** *Blind Before I Stop*, **Aretha Franklin** *Unforgettable*, **Willy DeVille** *Miracle* 180g LPs, **America** *Hide Away* white 180g LP, **Guano Apes** *Rareapes* coloured 180g 2LP, **Keb' Mo'** *Martin Scorsese Presents The Blues*

PRESSING MATTERS

Recent limited-run vinyl releases to look out for

Gabi Garbutt & The Illuminations ***Cockerel*** (Trapped Animal TAR 050 V, LP, 2022)
With its quintessentially British mix of charm, vulnerability and compelling storytelling, Gabi Garbutt's new album has plenty to offer across its 10 tracks. One is reminded of Sleeper, Life Without Buildings and classic, end-of-the-pier brass bands, while the more reflective moments allude to Garbutt's more literary/poetic influences. With extensive support from 6Music and tours with Edwyn Collins and The Libertines under her belt, Garbutt's star looks set to soar further. There are 300 copies being pressed on "Sea Blue" coloured vinyl.

Will Samson ***Active Imagination*** (Human Chorus HC 001 SE, LP, 2022)
A stunning new full-length from composer/songwriter Will Samson drawing on delicate strands of electronica, ambient and folk, for fans of Novo Amor, Bon Iver and Ry X. With themes centering on Samson's ongoing search for a sense of belonging and the fluidity of his familial roots, the album's narrative feels relevant. A limited-edition version is on transparent red vinyl, accompanied by a signed print, exclusively available from independent record shops.

GHUM ***Bitter*** (Everything Sucks ESM 0067 LPX, LP, 2022)
The early summer brings with it a long-awaited debut album from one of the capital's finest live acts. With members hailing from London, Spain, Brazil, and Malaysia, GHUM are a post-punk quartet combining dark riffs with big choruses and addictive hooks, channelling the energy of bands like Drahla, Savages and Moaning. There are two separate limited variants being offered: a pink vinyl version limited to 300 copies, as well as a pressing of 500 "Purple & White Galaxy swirl" editions.

Charlie Ashcroft

YOU BETTER YOU BET

What's hot for record collectors to invest in?

This month: God Save The Queen

Although the Queen's Diamond Jubilee is now in the rear-view mirror, it only seems fitting this month to examine the longevity of the Sex Pistols God Save The Queen single issued by Virgin Records at the end of May 1977. Most readers will be aware that, after being booted off EMI in January, the band signed to A&M in a deal which was intended to last for two years, for which the Pistols were intended to receive an annual advance of £75,000. Bad behaviour and a change of heart at the senior level at A&M saw the Pistols shown the door on 16 March 1977 – with a full £75,000 to show for it.

Yet Malcolm McLaren had a problem. One reason why A&M were so keen to rush release God Save The Queen was to have it in the shops before the Queen's Silver Jubilee, celebrating 25 years on the throne on 6 June. Whether there were multiple conversations with other labels or McLaren was playing coy, it was not until nearly two months after leaving A&M that the Pistols signed with Virgin on Friday 13 May. That meant Virgin had three weeks to get the single out before the 6 June celebrations kicked off. Jamie Reid's now-famous picture sleeve featuring blackmail lettering over the Queen's eyes and mouth was thought to be a bit too much and back-up plans were made to put the record in a plain blue sleeve. Despite grumblings from the printers, this never happened, although those plain blue samples that were made are worth in the region of £1,500. God Save The Queen/Did You No Wrong (Virgin VS 181) was released on 27 May 1977. Much has been made of the BBC radio ban on airing the single, but it sold like hot cross buns at Easter and rocketed up the charts. Debate still rages over the fact that it was listed at No 2 when it was outselling Rod Stewart's I Don't Want To Talk About It in Jubilee week. The problem was that the mainstream media really didn't want to talk about it – Sex Pistols being No 1 as the nation basted the Queen in an outpouring of love. A stock copy of God Save The Queen/ Did You Know Wrong is worth £10. You can pick up the Rod single for 50p. Finally, it seems apt that John Lydon is as much of a national cultural touchstone as the Queen herself. God save them both, I say.

Ian Shirley

Metric: coloured vinyl on the way

180g 2LP, **DAF** *1st Step To Heaven* coloured 180g LP, Music On Vinyl; **The Rolling Stones** *Hot Rocks 1964-71* 2LP, ABKCO; **Madness** *Mad Not Mad* 180g LP, BMG; **Warren Zevon** *Preludes* 2LP, New West; **Tyler The Creator** *Call Me If You Get Lost* 2LP, Columbia; **Sepultura** *Live In Sao Paolo* coloured 2LP, BMG; **Procol Harum** *Live In Europe* LP, Cantare; **Tegan & Sara** *Still Jealous* LP, Sire; **The Tragically Hip** *Live At The Roxy* 2LP, CD, Universal; **Nightwish** *Human: II: Nature* brown 3LP, Nuclear Blast; **Front 242** *Rewind* blue LP, Alfa Matrix; **Ferkat Al Ard**, *Oghneya* blue LP, CD, Habibi Funk; **Berto Pisano** *La Novizia* LP, Four Flies; **Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five** *Sugarhill Adventures* 2LP, Robinsongs; **Ian Hunter** *Once Bitten* 2LP, Demon; **Leopold Ross**/ **Nick Chuba**/**Atticus Ross** *Dr Death* red LP, Invada; **Nelly** *Nellyville* LP, Motown; **Otis Spann** *Is The Blues* LP, Candid; **Pere Ubu** *The Modern Dance* LP, Fire; **The Flower Kings** *Stardust We Are*, *Flower Power* 3LPs, CDs, InsideOut; **Twink** *You Reached For The Stars* violet LP, Sundazed; ***Hot Chocolate*** LP, Numero; **Slipknot** *All Hope Is Gone* coloured 2LP, Roadrunner; **The Distillers** *Sing Sing Death House* coloured LP, Epitaph; **The Heptones** *In A Dancehall Style* LP, Burning Sounds; ***Blossom Dearie*** LP, Public Domain; **Abbey Lincoln** *Straight Ahead* LP, Candid; John's Children's **Andy Ellison** *Clusterbombs* LP, Easy Action; **Jack Johnson** *Meet The Moonlight* LP, CD, Island; **The Staple Singers** *Be Altitude: Respect Yourself* LP, CD, Concord; **Slint** *Spiderland* LP, Touch & Go; **Cancer Bats** *Psychic Jailbreak* LP, Bat Skull; **Gov't Mule** *The Deepest End Vol 1*, *2* coloured 2LPs, Retroworld; **Peter Yorn** *Hawaii* LP, Label Exclusive; **The Mission** *Resurrection* blue 2LP, 2CD, **Pretty Boy Floyd** *Rock & Roll* LP, Cleopatra; **Don Cherry** *Om Shanti Om* LP, Black Sweat; **Pharaoh Sanders** *Journey To The One* LP, Pure Pleasure; ***Quiet Riot***, *II* 200g LPs, CDs, No Remorse; **Animals As Leaders** *Weightless* coloured LP, Prosthetic; **The Darkness** *Dawn Of Solace* LP, Noble Demon; **Timbaland** *Tim's Bio*, /**& Magoo** *Under Construction Pt 2*, *Indecent Proposal*, *Welcome To Our World* 2LPs, Blackground.

1 July **Ash** *1977* splatter LP, Echo; **Keane** *The Best Of* 180g 2LP, Interscope; **Paolo Nutini** *Last Night In The Bittersweet* 2LP, green 2LP, CD, cassette, Atlantic; **Tim Buckley** *Goodbye & Hello* yellow 180g LP, **Modern Talking** *Alone* 180g 2LP, **Morcheeba** *Dive Deep* turquoise 180g LP, **The Hoochie Coochie Men** *Danger: White Men Dancing* yellow 180g 2LP, Music On Vinyl; **Alan Silvestri** *Music For Film* white 2LP, Silva Screen; **Anti-Nowhere League** *Going Nowhere* LP, Secret; **Fleetwood Mac** *Madison Blues* LP, Indigo; **Kim Fowley** *In Deutschland* LP, Liberation Hall; **Saga** *Network*, *Trust* LPs, earMUSIC; **Ash** *1977* splatter LP, Echo; **Earth** *Full Upon Her Burning Lips* coloured 2LP, Sargent House; **Liza Minelli** *Live In New York 1979* coloured 2LP, Real Gone; **John Foxx** *The Marvellous Notebook* grey LP, CD, Metamatic; **Joe Bonamassa** *Blues Deluxe* red 2LP, Provogue; **Edguy** *Mandrake* LP, CD, AFM; **Carl Perkins & Friends** *Blue Suede Shoes* LP, Madfish; **The Mutants** *Deathrace 3000* LP, Green Cookie.

8 July *My Best Friend's Wedding OST* coloured LP, **Doris Troy** *Sings Just One Look* green LP, The Monkees' **Michael Nesmith** *Distant Drum* blue 2LP, Real Gone; **UK Subs** *Yellow Leader* colour 2 x 10" LP, Captain Oi!; ex-Rainbow's **Joe Lynn Turner** *The Devil's Door* coloured LP, **Black Oak Arkansas** *The Wild Bunch* coloured 2LP, Deadline; **Teddy Pendergrass** *Duets* gold LP, Goldenlane; **Frank Black & The Catholics** *The Complete Studio Albums* clear 180g 7LP, Demon; **The Who** *Tommy* 45rpm 180g 2LP, *Sell Out* 45rpm 180g LP, Polydor; **James Bay** *Leap* LP, orange LP, CD, cassette, EMI; **Metric** *Formentera* LP, sand, blue LPs, CD, Metric; **Elton John** *Regimental Sgt Zippo* LP, *Peachtree Road*, *The One* 2LPs, Mercury; **Indigo Girls** *Look Long* violet LP, *Long Ride* LP, Rounder; **Junior Wells** *Blues Legend* gold 2LP, **The Dickies** *Stukas Over Disneyland* yellow LP, Cleopatra; **Dolenz, Jones, Boyce & Hart** *The Guys Who Wrote Em & The Guys Who Sang Em* coloured 180g 2LP, CD, 7A; ***Emperor***, *Anthems To Welkin At Dusk*, *Prometheus*, *In The Nightside Eclipse*, *IX Equilibrium* 45rpm coloured LPs, Spinefarm; **Elvis Costello** *Look Now* coloured 8 x 7" box, ZZ Top's **Billy F Gibbons** *Hardware* LP, Concord; **Nazareth** *Hair Of The Dog*, *Rampant* purple LPs, *Razamanaz* yellow LP, CDs, Union Square; **Spacehog** *Resident Alien* pink 2LP, Real Gone; **Banks** *Serpentina* clear LP, AWAL; **Edgar Winter** *Brother Johnny* 2LP, Quarto Valley; **Johnny Burnett** *Rockabilly Boogie*, **Eric Dolphy** *Out There*, **Quincy Jones** *Big Band Bossa Nova*, **Jimmy Reed** *I'm* 180g LPs, **Elvis Presley** *Loving You* coloured 180g LP, **Kenny Burrell** *Midnight Blue* blue 180g LP, Not Now; **Charles Mingus** *Essential Works* 2LP, Diggers Factory.

15 July ex-White Lion's **Mike Tramp** *Stand Your Ground* LP, Target; **Ella Fitzgerald/Louis Armstrong** *Ella & Louis* LP, Verve; **Toyah** *The Blue Meaning* LP, Cherry Red; **Black Midi** *Hellfire* LP/flexidisc/cassette, clear LP/ flexidisc/cassette, red LP/flexidisc, CD, Rough Trade; **The Monkees** *Headquarters (Mono)* coloured 180g LP, **Grateful Dead** *Spring 1990* 180g 4LP, Friday; **Lera Lynn** *Something More Than Love* LP, CD, Icons Creating Evil; **Third Eye Blind** *A Collection* orange, gold 180g 2LPs, Rhino; **Associates** *Sulk* LP, 4LP, Union Square; **Camilla Cabelo** *Familia* LP, CD, Epic; **Jack Russell's Great White** *Once Bitten Acoustic Bytes* pink LP, Deadline; **Linda Gail Lewis** *Early Sides 1963-73* purple LP, Goldenlane; DEVO's **Mark Mothersbaugh/Wataru Hokoyama** *Ratchet & Clink: Rift Apart* 2LP, Milan; Hanoi Rocks' **Michael Monroe** *Sensory Overdrive* yellow 2LP, **Paradise Lost** *Tragic Idol* blue LP, **Arjen Anthony Lucassen** *Lost In The New Real* purple 2LP, Svart; **Nikki Sudden** *The Truth Doesn't Matter Remixed* 2LP, Troubadour; **Ozric Tentacles** *Floor's Too Far Away* coloured LP, Magna Carta; **Pavement** *Westing (By Musket And Sextant)* 2LP, Matador; **UK Subs** *Sensei* green LP, Cleopatra; **Idlewild** *The Remote Part* LP, Dig!; **Alan Parsons** *From The New World* LP, CD, Frontiers; **Simon Goff**/ **Katie Melua** *Aerial Objects* LP, CD, BMG; The Pop Group's **Gareth Sager Quartet** *Ghost Ship Trance Lamentations* LP, CD, ORG; ***Dengue Fever***, *Venus On Earth* LPs, Tuk Tuk; **Lloyd Cole** *Antidepressant* LP, Absolute; **Pop Smoke** *Faith* 2LP, Polydor; **Talk Talk** *The Party's Over* white, grey LPs, Dig!; **Albert King** *Born Under A Bad Sign* LP, Concord; **Hackedepicciotto** *The Current* LP, Mute.

22 July *Dr Who Sensorites* blue 3LP, Demon; Opeth's **Mikael Åkerfeldt** *CLARK* 2LP, CD, InsideOut; **She & Him** *Melt Away: A Tribute To Brian Wilson*

Rina Sawayama: red, and hot 'lava' vinyl

LP, CD, Fantasy; **Tangerine Dream** *Firestarter* LP, CD, Varese Sarabande; **The Alan Parsons Symphonic Project** *Live In Colombia* 3LP, earMUSIC; **Danzig** *6:66 Satan's Child* red LP, Cleopatra; **Fu Manchu** *No One Rides For Free* splatter LP, At The Dojo; **Warren Zevon** *Excitable Boy* red LP, Friday; **Mötley Crüe** *Shout At The Devil*, *Too Fast For Love*, *Dr Feelgood*, *Theatre Of Pain*, *Girls, Girls, Girls* LPs, CDs, BMG; **Mac DeMarco** *Rock And Roll Night Club* coloured LP, Captured Tracks; **Adrian Sherwood** *Dub No Frontiers* LP, CD, Real World; **Fela Kuti** *Roforofo Fight* 2LP, Knitting Factory.

29 July **Basement Jaxx** *Remedy* gold 2LP, *Rooty* pink, blue 2LP, XL; **Nas** *Magic* coloured LP, Mass Appeal; **Pyrolator** *Niemandsland* LP, CD, Bureau B; **The Babys** *Anthology* LP, Chrysalis; **Leon Russell** *Wedding Album* silver, gold LPs, **Linda Ronstadt** *Mad Love* 180g LP, Friday; **The Offspring** *Greatest Hits* LP, Rounder; **The Rolling Stones** *Beggars Banquet* LP, ABKCO; **Tangerine Dream** *Strange Behavior* green LP, Terror Vision; The Highwomen's **Amanda Shires** *Take It Like A Man* red LP, ATO; **Half Man Half Biscuit** *The Voltarol Years* LP, CD, R M Qualtrough; **Foxes** *The Kick* clear LP, PIAS; **Ani DiFranco** *Living In Clip* red 3LP, 2CD, Righteous Babe; ***Whitechapel*** LP, Metal Blade; **Nick Lowe** *The Old Magic* LP, Yep Roc.

5 August **Dana Fuchs** *Borrowed Time* LP, Ruf; M People's **Heather Small** *Colour My Life* LP, Warners; **Lights** *Pep* yellow LP, WEA; **Soulfly** *Totem* LP, Nuclear Blast; **Willie Nelson** *Picture In A Frame* LP, Qrates; **Caroline Polachek** *Pang* LP, Perpetual Novice; **Hank Snow** *Let Me Go Lover*, **Link Wray** *Rumble*, **Dion & The Belmonts** *The Hits & More*, **Muddy Waters** *The Best Of*, **Bob Newhart** *The Best Of*, **Duke Robillard** *They Called It Rhythm & Blues* LPs, Acrobat.

12 August **Blondie** *Vivir En La Habana* LP, BMG; **Silverchair** *Tomorrow* orange 180g LP, *Pure Massacre* green 180g LP, *Israel's Son* smoke 180g LP, Music On Vinyl; **Boris** *Heavy Rocks* LP, CD, cassette, Relapse; ***The Bluetones*** blue LP, *Luxembourg* mauve LP, *A New Athens* LP, Demon; **Benny Carter** *Jazz Giant* LP, Craft; **Michael Price** *Whitsun* LP, CD, cassette, The Control Room; **The Dickies** *The Punk Singles Collection* LP, Audio Platter.

19 August **Oscar Peterson** *We Get Requests* LP, Verve; **Five Finger Death Punch** *Afterlife* purple, white, yellow LPs, CD, cassette, Better Noise; **Napalm Death** *A Final Throw Of Throes* LP, red LP, Century Media; **Marianne Faithfull** *No Exit* LP, earMUSIC.

26 August **Suede** *Love & Poison*, **Echo & The Bunnymen** *Live In Liverpool*, Suede's **Bernard Butler** *People Move On* 2LPs, **Ocean Colour Scene** *Saturday* LP, Demon; **ELP** *Singles* 12 x 7" box, BMG; **Step By Step** *I Always Wanted To Be In The Band* LP, Demon.

2 September ***Yungblud*** LP, red LP, CD, cassette, Locomotion; **Rina Sawayama** *Hold The Girl* red, orange LPs, CD, cassette, Dirty Hit; **In This Moment** *Blood*, **Voivod** *Synchro Anarchy* LPs, Century Media; **Brother Jack McDuff** *Live At Parnell's* 3LP, 2CD, Soul Bank.

9 September **Emile Sande** *Let's Say For Instance* 2LP, Chrysalis; **Bill Evans** *At Town Hall* LP, Verve; **The Afghan Whigs** *How Do You Burn?* LP, BMG; **Built To Spill** *When The Wind Forgets Your Name* green LP, CD, Sub Pop.

16 September **Ella Fitzgerald/Louis Armstrong** *Ella & Louis Again* LP, Verve; **Death Cab For Cutie** *Asphalt Meadows* LP, pink LP, CD, Atlantic; **Ash** *Free All Angels* splatter LP, Echo; **Amorphis** *Far From The Sun* coloured LP, Atomic Fire; **Turin Brakes** *Wide-Eyed Nowhere* LP, Cooking Vinyl.

23 September Take That's **Mark Owen** *Land Of Dreams* LP, BMG; **The Soup Dragons** *Raw TV Products* white LP, Last Night From Glasgow; **Example** *We May Grow Old But We Never Grow Up* LP, CD, BMG.

30 September **Craig David** *22* LP, BMG; **And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead** *Xi: Bleed Here Now* 2LP, Dine Alone; **Dead Kennedys** *Dead Fruit For Rotting Vegetables 2022 Mix* LP, Manifesto; **Donovan** *What's Bin Did And What's Bin Hid* coloured LP, Culture Factory; ***Helloween*** 2LP, Reaper; **Yann Tiersen** *11 5 18 2 5 18* 2LP, Mute; **Blancmange** *Private View* LP, CD, London.

7 October **The Sweet** *Ballroom Blitz* LP, Rockbeat; **Queensrÿche** *Digital Noise Alliance* LP, CD, Century Media.

14 October **Roy Haynes** *Out Of The Afternoon* LP, Verve; **Gun** *Calton Songs* coloured LP, CD, Cherry Red; **Dr John** *Things Happen That Way* LP, Rounder.

4 November **Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes** *Live In Cleveland 77* 2LP, Cleveland Intl; **The Mutants** *Curse Of The Easily Amused* LP, Liberation Hall.

11 November **Pharoah Sanders** *Karma* LP, Verve.

18 November Ex-SWANS' **Jarboe** *Sacrificial Cake* lavender 2LP, The Circle Music.

25 November **ELP** *Black Moon* LP, BMG; **Planet Drum** *In The Groove* LP, CD, BFD.

2 December **Oscar Peterson** *Night Train* LP, Verve; **Danny Elfman** *Spider-Man* LP, gold, silver LPs, Sony.

MY TOP 5

Readers' stand-outs from their record collection

The Who *Who's Next* (Track 2408 102, LP, UK, 1971) **£50**
Pete Townshend at his peak. It starts with the classic Baba and finishes with the thumping rock anthem, Won't Get Fooled Again. Some brilliant tracks that missed the cut appear on the *Odds & Sods* album.

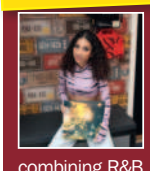
Free *Free Live* (Island ILPS 9160, LP, UK, 1971) **£40**
Although it's a compilation of a few concerts with one studio addition it does not detract from the feeling of a live concert. The songs chosen (more rock than blues) give the record terrific energy. Although All Right Now is on it, Fire And Water is the best track from a terrific list.

Blue Oyster Cult *Agents Of Fortune* (CBS S81385, LP, UK, 1976) **£10**
A classic American rock album, this is Blue Oyster Cult playing with a little restraint, which makes it easy to appreciate the melodies, but it still has that underlying heavy rock theme. A nice cameo from Patti Smith as well.

Back Street Crawler *The Band Plays On* (Atlantic K 50173, LP, UK, 1975) **£15**
This was Paul Kossoff's band following Free's split. This first album has a list of great tracks which have Kossoff's unique guitar sound. The songs are neither heavy nor deeply blue and this results in a pleasant album which you can listen to over and over again.

Uriah Heep *Uriah Heep Live* (Bronze ISLD 1, LP, UK, 1973) **£30**
A great live double-album, which starts off at a fast pace with great short numbers, followed by longer classics (including Gypsy). I love the combination of the guitars and Moog synthesiser. It has a really good drum solo in the middle and finishes with a good old rock'n'roll medley.
Emyr Reynolds

MY PRECIOUS



Sandra Hakky on Prince's *Sign O' The Times*
"The songs are incredible, produced to perfection, combining R&B, funk, soul, pop, and more. I remember first hearing ...Girlfriend in a car, with my co-producer. I was in awe of the production, from the minimalistic compressed beat, to the pitched voice. It opened a whole new world of expressing through vocal FX and mixing. An amazing record – such variation in style, yet a red thread in sound and production."

Sandra Hakky* Hakky The System *is due via Hakky Music.

FIRST SPIN/MY TOP 5
If you have a reminiscence about your first vinyl purchase, or would like us to feature your Top 5 list (along with catalogue details and why you chose those records), please send to paul.lester@metropolis.co.uk

Labels, please send vinyl LP release info to tim.jones@metropolis.co.uk

RC investigates

Tangerine Dream on *Grand Theft Auto V*, Nile Rodgers' work on *Halo 2*, and NIN's *Quake*, below

TECHNO TECHNO!

Ian Shirley casts his analogue eyes and ears over tech-exclusive music

In 2021, I interviewed Toyin Agbetu about a career commencing with Street Soul group, Deluxe, and composing music for computer games in the 80s, when the gaming industry was in its infancy. Since then, computer games have become the biggest entertainment industry on the planet, thanks to everything from *Donkey Kong*, *FIFA*, *Final Fantasy* and *Call Of Duty* to *Sims*, *Minecraft* and *Guitar Hero*, to name but a few. Due to the small amount of memory in 80s games like *Tetris* and *Pac Man*, the accompanying music was never expansive, though certain themes remain etched into the memories of those who played them, and some were released on vinyl compilations. As machine memory capacity increased, and games grew more complex and immersive, so did the importance of music. Computer-based composers like **Koji Kondo** (*Super Mario*, *Legend Of Zelda*), **Nobuo Uematsu** (*Final Fantasy*) and **Jesper Kyd** (*Hitman*, *Assassins Creed*) established huge global followings. Equally, other games simply licenced in pre-recorded tracks by well-known artists: Tony Hawks' *Skateboarding* series featured the likes of **Primus**, **Dead Kennedys**, **Suicidal Tendencies**, **Public Enemy**, **NWA** and **Ramones**.

One blockbuster in the first-person shooting genre was Id Software's *Doom* (1993). The successful franchise accrued a cult-like status around its original music, composed by **Mick Gordon**, finally making it to vinyl in 2016. Id's follow-up, *Quake* (1996), contained an original soundtrack by **Nine Inch Nails**, appearing on LP in 2020 (Null B 0027576, £20; 180g 2LP, £40).

Numerous famous musicians have created music specifically for video games. **Michael Jackson** first got involved with Sega in 1990, with the video game based on his *Moonwalker* film. A games aficionado, Jackson delighted in writing music for *Sonic The Hedgehog 3* (1994), though allegations about his private life meant that much of it went uncredited. It's yet to be issued on LP, but the 1996 single, Stranger In Moscow, was based on one of his tracks.

With **Reeves Gabrels**, **David Bowie** not only wrote music for, but appeared as a character in, Eidos' *Nomad Soul* (1999). No official vinyl release has emerged, but a bootleg 2LP did in 2016. Bowie collaborator, Chic's **Nile Rodgers**, has worked a lot in video games, notably producing the *Halo 2* soundtrack in 2004. It was issued on vinyl a decade later (Microsoft, 34300003) and now changes hands for £200-plus. The earlier *Halo – Combat Evolved* (2011), composed by **Martin O'Donnell/Martin Salvatori** (Sumthing Else, SE 3002 1), sells for £300-plus.

These days, games can be played for days, so a lot of music is required, and hundreds of composers work specifically in the field. **Tangerine Dream** laid down 60-plus hours of music for *Grand Theft Auto 5* in 2013! Some appeared on *The Music Of Grand Theft Auto 5* 2LP (Mass Appeal MSAP 014 LP), which commands £200. **Amon Tobin**'s original soundtrack LP to *Chaos Theory*, based on Tom Clancy's novel, for Ubisoft, in 2006 (Ninja Tune, ZEN 100), makes £60.

Paul McCartney not only wrote Hope For The Future for the *Destiny* game of 2014, but also worked on 42 instrumental tracks for it. A 6LP set of 2018 on Bungie costs £300, though there's a 12" single of 2015 (MPL, HRM 36718 01) for £15. **Brian Eno**'s 2008 *Spore* music mutated in tandem with the game's creatures that grew and transformed as players used tools in it. His *Spore* music remains unissued on vinyl, while **Linda Lewis** and **Florence + The Machine** placed tunes in the *Final Fantasy* series, and **Beck** composed three songs for 2012's *Sound Shapes* that aren't available anywhere else. **Chvrches** also wrote Warning Call as the theme to the *Mirror's Edge Catalyst* game in 2016.

Dedicated band games range from **Wu-Tang Clan**'s successful *Shaolin Style* fighting game of 1999, to more pedestrian, niche fair, such as **The Residents** (*Bad Day On The Midway*, 1995), **Iron Maiden** (*Ed Hunter,* 1999), **KISS** (*Psycho Circus,* 2000) and **DEVO** (*Adventures Of The Smart Patrol*, 2000). **Queen**'s *The eYe* of 1998 is typical of this fare, featuring great music, but truly awful gameplay. Still, for Queen fans, the 5CD set released by Electronic Arts is a collectable worth seeking out for £40.

Ego can see musicians devising concepts that are truly mind-blowing, as in 2015, when **Kayne West** pitched Nintendo an idea to develop a game called *Only One*, where the player guides their mother through the afterlife. As you can imagine, it was rejected! But with income from streaming for many artists pitifully low, writing songs for hit video games remains attractive, **Ed Sheeran** performing new songs in the *Pokemon Go* app in 2021. Many record labels are now dedicated to releasing music on vinyl from classic or new games, including Black Screen, Cartridge Thunder, Data Discs, Electronic Arts, Iam8bit, Invada, Kitty On Fire, Minimum and Stumpy Frog. As you might expect, the packaging of gaming LPs is often amazing, so, if you want to get collecting the future, join the game.

Let us know about other tech- or game-exclusive music you have via rc.editorial@metropolis.co.uk.

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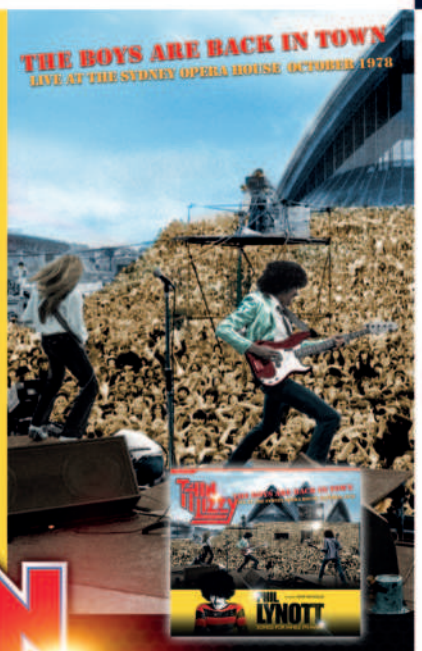
SONGS FOR WHILE I'M AWAY



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The Collector

This month: photographer **Mark Mawston**

Mark with his collection: "I stopped counting in the late 90s"

Mark Mawston's love of music began when he "borrowed" old jukebox singles from the 50s and 60s from his parents and their friends. He later found that photography enabled him to meet many of his musical heroes, including a good number of the singers from those old 45s. His first break as a photographer was when his image of graffiti adorning the wall outside Abbey Road Studios was chosen to represent The Beatles' *Anthology* in the EMI *100 Years of Recorded Music* exhibition. Since then, he has snapped the good and the great. In one week alone he photographed Bruce Springsteen, Paul Simon, Brian Wilson, James Brown and Dave Gilmour. Mark has shot gigs and written reviews for *Record Collector* for several years and says he loves "being a small cog in the wheel of one of the key magazines left for fans of music".

What do you collect, and why?
As a kid I used to ask my mum and dad's friends if I could have their old singles as my dad had given me an old Dansette player. These singles ranged from about 1958-65 – I've always loved rock'n'roll and 60s pop. Being able to name an obscure B-side always helped when photographing musicians, the knowledge of whom came from those singles. Records are diaries. I still buy new chart albums but rummaging through Oxfam and second-hand record shops full of vintage vinyl and finding a gem are the [archaeologist] Howard Carter moments.

How big is your collection?
I honestly don't know but could tell you where every one of them is, even though they need to get filed alphabetically once again, as they were before we had kids and I had to give up the room full of handmade shelves for them all. I stopped counting when the first number was followed by three noughts, in the late 90s. Over the past few years I've been buying some of the albums, on vinyl, that I initially bought on CD, reversing the 90s, though I still think there's room for both in anyone's collections. My iPod, which I still use all the time, has a fraction of the collection but still lists over 22,000 songs transferred from bought albums alone.

"Brian Wilson nearly flipped out when he signed *Surfin' Safari*"

What do you think it's worth?
I couldn't say for sure but I know that some are very rare. I have some key signed albums which I acquired from promoters and collectors over the years and a great many I've got signed in person when I've managed to get one-on-one with the singers or bands themselves at aftershow parties. Carrying a large camera bag means you can pull an album cover out when the moment arises and you've got on their good side. Being the Royal Festival Hall Meltdown photographer since around 2000 for rock and pop albums, and being writer/photographer for Cinema Retro and Bondstars, really helped for soundtracks.

How and where do you store it?
My wife kindly let me have the smallest room as a music room, which is where I keep the ones I like to play. There are many more in storage. I opened a few boxes recently and had a wonderful day in what, to me, was the greatest record shop ever. There were a few in there that I couldn't afford to buy now (such as a great mono *'White Album*). I still love finding a treasure amongst the £1 MFPs in boxes on charity shop floors.

What's the rarest/most unusual/most valuable item you have?
I think it's what's important to you that make them the most valuable, like *The Shadows Greatest Hits* my grandpa taped for me as a kid and drew the album cover art onto the tape box. I found a copy signed by Hank Marvin at a boot fair at a train station when visiting my home town of Newcastle a few years ago, so that was special. However, key pieces are a signed *Beatles For Sale*, which includes a very faded George Martin signature and is the most expensive record I ever bought, and the original The Beach Boys *Surfin' Safari*, gifted to me by a collector friend. Brian Wilson nearly flipped when he signed it and showed it round the room backstage at the SMiLE gigs at the RFH. I also have things like Arthur Lee's annotated copy of *Out Here*, when he signed himself as Arthur Ly, and stuff by the Stones, Andy Warhol and Dylan plus things like a gold label Please Please Me, my signed Bond soundtracks and the *Fistful Of Dollars* album I'd listened to since I was a kid, signed by Ennio Morricone and Clint Eastwood that a collector got when the latter came to the BFI. Among my most treasured items, however, are the handwritten lyrics to Tell 'Em I'm Surfin' by The Fantastic Baggies, given to me by PF Sloan. I got to know PF through Beach Boys songwriter Steve Kalinich and ended up obtaining several of his original lyric sheets. That, to me, surpasses anything by Lennon and McCartney and if you'd told my 15-year-old self I'd own the actual handwritten lyrics, I'd have laughed.

What elusive gem are you still looking for?
The Beatles' 'Butcher' cover. I once missed a Sex Pistols God Save The Queen on A&M in a charity shop by going to the bank to get some money as their cash machine was broken. When I got back, it had been bought.

Photo: Xanthe Mawston

What's given you the biggest thrill?
Finding a shop full of someone's amazing collection that their family didn't value. I did that just last year and bought an amazing batch of records – everything from The Doors to Miles Davis – for a fraction of their worth. Having the reformed Love use my pic on concert posters was great. The day my wife, a designer, and I had two albums with covers we'd designed (or, in my case, shot) side by side on the new release shelf in HMV and Fopp was a magical moment. So, too, were having a selection of my work in Peter Blake's collection of Brian Wilson pics, having my Ennio Morricone shot used for his gig passes, and my cover shot for Duane Eddy's last album *Road Trip* was a huge thrill as he's a hero.

What's your favourite record shop?
Growing up in Newcastle it was Pet Sounds. Then, when I first moved to London, it was Beanos of Croydon. Now it's Monster Music in Hayes Lane Market in Crystal Place with the wonderful Wayne who always gives me a good deal and even keeps cakes his wife has made to give to the kids.

How often do you listen to the stuff in your collection?
Nigh on every night. In lockdown I had an hour's 'playtime' after being on the laptop all day and before watching TV at night and I like to keep that hour of listening up, especially after getting new additions to the collection.

Is there a visual side to collecting for you? Have you ever bought a record for the sleeve alone, or for a picture disc?
I've always bought records on the strength of their covers or song-titles. Very rarely have I been let down. Favourites are *Motown Chartbusters Vol 6* that was in my dad's collection. Other examples include Jan & Dean's *Meet Batman*, *Scott 3*, and *Forever Changes*, which also happen to be among my favourite albums full stop. I also have one of the original unreleased/withdrawn cover slips for *SMiLE*, with all the colour codes etc, signed by artist Frank Holmes and Brian Wilson.

How will you eventually dispose of your collection?
I hope my kids look after it. I like to tell them the stories behind the records and why they are important, to me as well as to music in general. My 11-year-old's favourite bands are The Beach Boys and The Everly Brothers, so I like to think it's sinking in somehow.

What's your all-time favourite record, regardless of value or rarity?
It's actually a couple of tapes called Rock 2 and 3 (1 is somewhere at my parents' house). A guy my dad worked with said he had nearly every great rock'n'roll single. My dad took in three TDK 90 tapes and asked him to tape some for me to prove it. The guy wasn't lying. Getting these tapes in my early teens changed and soundtracked my life and that of my friends. When I transferred them to CD and played them in the car, they had the same effect on my kids, who both sing along to every track word-for-word on road trips.

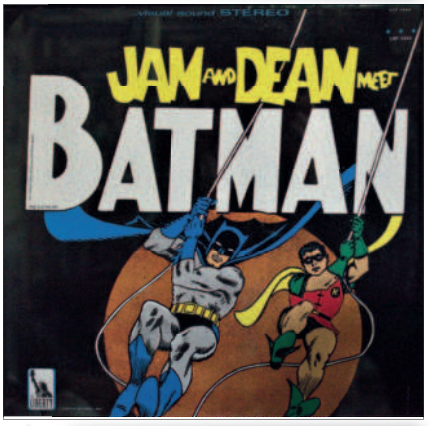
Mark is currently compiling a collection of unreleased photos of his, which will be available via Rock Archive (www.rockarchive.com), and he is compiling a book (and looking for a publisher!), in which he describes meetings with Brian Wilson, the Stones, Shane McGowan, Iggy Pop, Sex Pistols, Cream, Ennio Morricone, John Barry, Arthur Lee and more.

The Beach Boys – *Wild Honey* (Capitol T 2859, Mono LP, UK, 1968) Estimated market value: **£45**

The Beach Boys – *Surfin' Safari* (Capitol T 1808, LP, UK, 1963) Estimated market value (signed by Brian Wilson): **£200**

A Fistful Of Dollars & For A Few Dollars More OSTs (RCA Camden CDS 1052, LP, UK, 1968) EMV (Signed by Ennio Morricone): **£300**

The Rolling Stones – *Sticky Fingers* (COC 59100, LP, UK, 1971) Estimated market value (signed by all Stones, with ticket): **£500**



Jan And Dean – Jan And Dean Meet Batman (Liberty LBY 1309, LP, UK, 1966) Estimated market value: **£40**

You Only Live Twice OST (United Artists (S)ULP 1171, LP, UK, 1967) EMV (signed by Leslie Bricusse): **£50**

Love – Forever Changes (Elektra EKL 4013, LP, UK, 1968) EMV (with signatures from Arthur Lee and Johnny Echols): **£200**

Changing the channel (left to right): Billy Ficca, Richard Lloyd, Tom Verlaine, Fred Smith, 1977

VALUE ADDED FACTS

Ian Shirley, editor of the *Rare Record Price Guide*, answers your questions

MOONAGE DAYDREAM

There's a quick way of identifying a first UK pressing of Television's landmark debut *Marquee Moon*, says Ian Shirley, and it all comes down to punctuation...

I was wondering if you could let me know how to determine a first pressing? I bought the debut LP by the American band Television after seeing them perform live at the Newcastle City Hall in May 1977. It was a bit of a double whammy as Blondie were also on the bill. The next day I went out and bought their debut albums. I particularly enjoyed Television's *Marquee Moon* because it was so musical. I still play the album today and think that my copy has aged very well – I've always been particular about keeping my collection in good condition. Anyway, I would grade my copy of *Marquee Moon* as VG+. The Blondie LP is actually EX because, despite their later enjoying greater success, I did not play the LP as much.

Gary Duggan via email

Despite being hailed as one of the premier punk bands on the New York scene that congregated around the CBGB club, Television actually dated back to 1972 when Tom Verlaine (Thomas Miller, guitar/vocals) and close friend Richard Hell (Richard Lester Meyers, bass) formed a band called Neon Boys with Billy Ficca on drums. By 1973 they had rebranded themselves Television, adding Richard Lloyd on second guitar. Hell had an issue with Lloyd and Verlaine growing tighter as friends and musicians and in 1975 left to form The Heartbreakers (with former New York Doll Johnny Thunders) and, later, Richard Hell & The Voidoids.

Former Blondie member Fred Smith (not to be confused with Patti Smith's future husband, Fred "Sonic" Smith) took over bass duties in Television. This line-up burnished their sound through live work and, in the same year, released a single, Little Johnny Jewel Part One/Little Johnny Jewel Part Two on an independent label set up by their manager Terry Ork (Ork Records, 81975, 1975, £150). Television often co-headlined gigs with the fast-rising Patti Smith Group – indeed, she and Tom Verlaine were an item and Smith's close friend Robert Mapplethorpe, who had snapped the cover for Smith's debut Horses *(Arista ARTY 122, UK, 1975, £40), took the moody* Marquee Moon *front cover image.*

Television soon had record labels tuning into their frequency. At one point they recorded demos for Island with Brian Eno at the controls but Verlaine was unhappy with the sound and the stipulation that Eno would produce their debut LP. The band eventually signed to Elektra and recorded their debut LP, Marquee Moon, *releasing it in America on 8 February 1977 and in the UK on 11 March (K 52046). The album showcased their unique musical chemistry, especially Lloyd and Verlaine's intricate guitar duels on the extended title track, Torn Curtain and Guiding Light.* Marquee Moon *received favourable critical reviews (most famously, Nick Kent's* NME *two-page testimonial, which became the music paper's front cover story that week) and the band were championed by DJs such as John Peel. They flew across the pond to play live to promote the LP, with Blondie as support act. Television played nine shows in the UK between 22 and 31 May 1977, including the gig you attended. Then they trotted off to Europe for a few dates.*

It's interesting, Gary, that you ran out and bought the LP the next day; the first UK pressing of Marquee Moon *came in a sleeve sporting quotations marks around the title. The album also came with an inner sleeve. This edition is worth £50 in Mint condition. The album made the UK Top 30 and thus, to meet demand, was re-pressed in a sleeve that matched the original US pressing, which didn't feature quote marks. Most of these also contained an inner sleeve so you need to check your copy although I suspect, since you bought it two months after release, you've probably got the second pressing. Television returned to the UK in April 1978 to promote their second LP,* Adventure, *and the first date was in Newcastle! Although* Adventure *(K 52072) enjoyed great reviews (save for Julie Burchill's brutal* NME *drubbing) and went Top 10 in the UK, it's only worth £18 if you have it on red vinyl and £15 on the black stuff.*

Despite their success, Television split up in 1978 due to friction between Lloyd and Verlaine, who both re-signed with Elektra as solo artists. But they never enjoyed the same success again.

WHAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY?

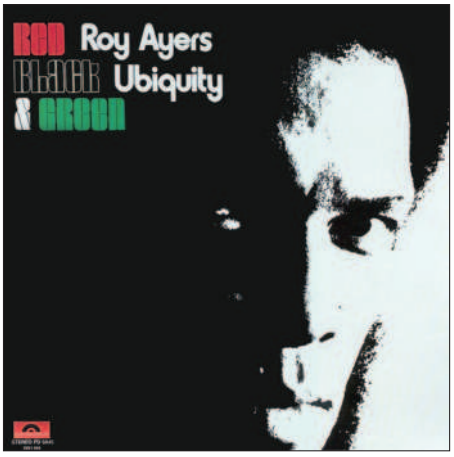
I'm pretty new to the game of record dealing and sell most of my stuff online. I have discovered that it can be pretty hard to pick up decent collections at a decent price since most sellers can now look online to value records and then haggle. Saying that, I did pick up a small but nice collection of soul records the other week. One of the albums is a bit baffling. It's by an artist called Black Renaissance and the title is *Body Mind And Spirit*. I have done some research on Discogs and it seems that the man behind the LP, recorded in 1977, was an American called Harry Whittaker. But the LP that I have was released in Japan by the Baystate label in 1977. It seems that it may have been a bootleg – although unusually Discogs do not list it as such – but I wondered how it got recorded in America and put out in Japan. I don't think I'll have trouble selling it – I see on Popsike that it has sold for up to £500. My copy is VG+ and does not have the original obi.

James Denver via email

Harry Whittaker was a pianist, songwriter and arranger who played with and arranged many of the tracks on Roy Ayers' Ubiquity albums including He's Coming *(Polydor PD 5022, US, 1972, £40),* Red Black & Green *(Polydor, PD 5045, US, 1973, £35) and* Change Up The Groove *(PD 6032, US, 1974, £40). By 1977, Whittaker was performing live with, and acting as musical director for, Roberta Flack on albums such as* Blue Lights In The Basement *(Atlantic SD 19149, US). Flack had hit paydirt a few years before with Killing Me Softly With His Song and Feel Like Making Love. Well paid and with money in his pocket, Whittaker funded a studio session on 15 January 1977 – Martin Luther King's birthday. The line-up included Billy Hart (drums/percussion), Howard King (drums/percussion), Buster Williams (bass), James Mtume (percussion), Azar Lawrence (tenor sax), David Schnitter (tenor sax) and Whittaker on piano. The roll-call of vocalists was equally large and included Ednah Holt, Lani Groves, Assata Doby and Sandy Nakurma. All manner of people were invited to the studio to hang out, including Roberta Flack. The band laid down two extended tracks – Black Renaissance and Magic Ritual – written by Whittaker but with plenty of scope for musical and vocal improvisation. The results straddle that wonderful terrain where spiritual jazz meets Marvin Gaye's* What's Going On *– a field that has been ploughed recently by Kamasi Washington.*

Now this is where things get interesting. Due to his busy schedule and his lack of experience with the business of getting a deal, Whittaker didn't have the time to shop the tape to labels. It appears that he did send out some copies and one ended up in Japan. Without his permission, the Baystate label released the LP under the name of Black Renaissance *(RVJ 6006). Whittaker wasn't paid or informed that the record was released. Its shady background may explain the album's generic artwork, similar to the first Baystate release, an album by Max Roach's M'Boom Percussion Ensemble,* Re: Percussion *(RVJ 6001, £60). It includes inaccurate personnel details and the wrong recording date of June 1977. Although Whittaker was frequently in Japan with Roberta Flack, he never had time to track down the people behind the label although the album was re-pressed in Japan in 1983 and Baystate issued plenty more product.*

Over time the fantastic music on the album has made it a collector's item and copies have changed hands for as much as £400. It was only in 2002 that the American label Luv N' Haight finally put out an authorised reissue on CD and vinyl (LHLP 037, £40). The liner notes state that the masters were destroyed in a fire and so it may have either been a copy of the tape or an original Japanese Baystate LP that provided the source for this remaster. The LP sold well and was repressed on red vinyl by Luv N' Haight in 2013. Anyway, if yours is an original Japanese copy, it's worth at least £150 in VG+ without the paper obi strip on the side. The album remains sought-after by Roy Ayers, spiritual jazz and Harry Whittaker collectors.



PAKISTANI ISLAND

I recently took a punt on a record based on the title and think I made a mistake. The LP is called *Pakistani Soul Session* and was released by Island in 1967. I paid £40 for it and, as you might imagine, thought that it was going to be a bit of sitar soul. There are plenty of traditional Indian – or should I say Pakistani – instruments on it but not one ounce of what you might call soul music. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Bill Herald via email

Chris Blackwell's Island Records is one of the most fascinating to put out product in the UK. Cutting his teeth with singles culled from Jamaica, Blackwell scored a massive hit with Millie Small's My Boy Lollipop in 1963, after which Island went into overdrive and also expanded into the emerging soul market with the Sue label. By 1967, Island began to chart a course towards rock music with acts including Traffic coming to the fore. Pakistani Soul Session *(Island ILP 945) may have been a punt by Blackwell to sell records to the growing Pakistani community in the UK. He produced the album along with Jimmy Miller (with whom he'd worked on Traffic albums). Apparently, the group of Pakistani musicians were on tour in the UK and I imagine that Blackwell may have decided to record them after seeing them perform.*

The tracks were laid down in a day or so and then the record was quickly released. There was, to be fair, a lot of Eastern music in the air in 1967. George Harrison's Within You, Without You kicked off Side Two of Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, *bringing music from the Indian subcontinent to a much wider audience. There were also albums like* Indo-Jazz Fusions *(Columbia SCX 6122, UK, £50) by Joe Harriott and John Mayer the same year – the follow-up to* Indo-Jazz Suite *(Columbia SCX 6025, UK, £75). So maybe Blackwell tried unsuccessfully to catch a wave. Though its back cover liner note stated that "the West is going to hear much more of this ancient but curiously futuristic sound", the LP sold poorly, making copies quite rare and worth around £85 in Mint condition. £40 is a pretty good price.*

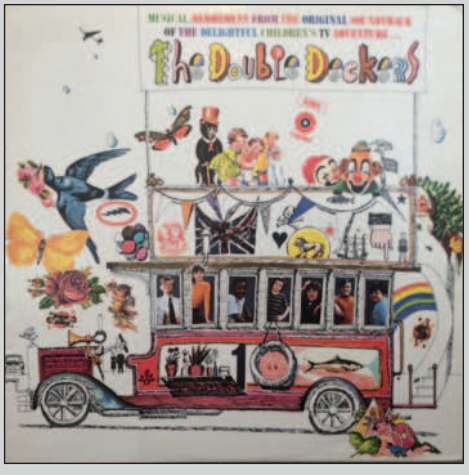
DOUBLE VISION

I bought an album – *The Double Deckers* – the other day purely for nostalgia. When I saw the LP, it took me back to my childhood because I can recall seeing the show on TV in the 70s. But when I played the album, it turned out not to contain the very memorable theme-tune of the series – Get On Board. What a let down! Cannot grumble much given that the LP only cost me £5 and I was able to listen to the title track on that wonder of modern musical archiving, YouTube.

Martin Terrel vial email

I'm actually old enough to remember watching the Here Come The Double Deckers! *TV series on the BBC when it was first broadcast back in 1971. I even remember the theme-song – Get On Board – which was fantastic. To explain to readers under 60,* Here Come The Double Deckers! *was a children's show that followed the exploits of seven young scamps whose clubhouse was a double decker bus parked in what looked like a better kept yard than the one run by Steptoe and Son. It was produced in the UK by Century Films in association with 20th Century Fox in America. As American TV money was involved, there was a non-English flavour to parts of the show. Thus, the character Sticks was obsessed with Ringo Starr, played the drums and wore american football shirts. Most of the cast of young kids were unknowns and in the show adult supervision of sorts was provided by Melvyn Hayes – best known to Cliff Richard fans for his appearance in the film* Summer Holiday *and later on as the theatrical luvvie in* It Ain't Half Hot Mum.

Here Come The Double Deckers! *was filmed between February and July 1970 at Elstree studios and surrounding locations and cost around £2,000 per episode. The series premiered not in the UK but on ABC in America in September 1970. It wasn't until 1 January 1971 that the first episode (of 17) was broadcast in the UK by the BBC. I always assumed, as the theme-song Get On Board was so good – it's got what sounds like a wicked, funky synth-break in the middle – that it was released in the UK as a single. Nope! It was, however, released in New Zealand on 7" with With A Little Bit Of Love on the flip (CP 547, £30). It was also the first track on a six-track EP –* The Double Deckers *– that seems to have been issued in America and the Far East. There was an LP of songs from the series –* The Double Deckers *– released by Capitol both here and in America in 1971. But while a lot of songs from different episodes were on the LP, Get On Board was not. No wonder a UK pressing (EST 672) is only worth £20. Thankfully, in 2007 Poker/ Cherry Red reissued the album on CD and made sure that Get On Board was included (DECKCD 102). The liner notes are excellent and reveal that the funky part was actually a bank of ocarinas and a baritone sax.* Here Come The Double Deckers! *was supposed to run for 26 episodes but was cancelled after 17. The show generated plenty of UK merchandise: an annual, a colouring book and a novel. Stateside there was even a lunch box and a thermos flask. Though the show wasn't a success, it's fondly remembered today and, of course, the character of Spring – aka Brinsley Forde – went on to enjoy a successful musical career with Aswad.*



Send your Value Added Facts questions to ian.shirley@metropolis.co.uk or by post to the usual RC address. www.rarerecordpriceguide.com

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Diggin' For GOLD

Our regular look at the more arcane corners of record collecting. Includes Label Of Love and Sound And Vision

HIP HOP LP GOLD

Dudley Jaynes selects eight rare albums which, despite their scarcity, are essential listening

Hip hop started as a singles genre with the majority of early records released on 12". As the genre's popularity grew, and with the surge in major-label interest during the late 80s, more hip hop artists began to craft long-players. Back in *RC* 398 and *RC* 432 we traced the development of the rap album from its early beginnings with short expositions, such as those released by the likes of Treacherous Three and Run DMC in the early 80s, to major-label involvement, the rise of the skit and, of course, the move to double-vinyl packages from Mobb Deep and others in the early to mid-90s.

With the resurgence of vinyl, the hip hop album is becoming ever more elaborate and many more collectors' gems are being birthed along the way. A great label for this attention to detail is the US-based Rhymesayers, the home of artists such as Evidence, Sa-Roc and Atmosphere.

TONY D

Music Makes You Move

(Sure Shot 2500 LP, US, 1989) **£35**

RC 474 examined hip hop's development in New Jersey and one of the neighbourhoods we focused our sights on was Trenton. Much of Trenton's rich hip hop history, which spawned artists such as Poor Righteous Teachers and YZ, can be traced back to the late, great Tony D. Tony D's debut album on his own indie imprint was mainly an instrumental affair but with two great vocal tracks featuring YZ and Too Kool Posse. It houses the infamous Adam's Nightmare, which Naughty By Nature would take to form the basis of their hit OPP.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Compilation

(TNA 9005139, LP, US, 1990) **£200**

This obscure Connecticut compilation has only surfaced in recent years and is an essential piece in the jigsaw of the area's hip hop history. Showcasing a variety of genres, the predominant sound is hip hop and much of the production is handled by Money Moses. In addition, it features work from Tootskee & The Czar MC who would go on to champion indie greats such as Lonnie O. All the hip hop tracks are essential listening and the compilation ably bridges the gap between the end of the Tony Pearson/Mr Magic era and the early 90s resurgence of artists such as Lonnie O and Chris Lowe.

DR DRE

The Chronic

(Interscope P 157128, LP, US, 1992) **£250**

Although not obscure by any stretch of the imagination, this LP – Dr Dre's debut – warrants inclusion due to its exponential rise in value in the last 10 years. This is perhaps partly due to the resurgence of vinyl and also the release of documentaries such as *The Defiant Ones*. Mint copies have appreciated by around 10 times over a relatively short period. The album is also significant because it marked the beginning of Dr Dre's solo career; this would influence some of the biggest hip hop acts of all time such as Snoop and Eminem.

MASTA ACE INC

Sittin' On Chrome

(Delicious Vinyl C 1724383287314, chrome picture disc, US, 1995) **£150**

Another album which, in its regular form, is brilliant but not obscure, is Masta Ace's third studio LP (and second with the INC). Though it was their last album, it would prove to be Ace's biggest commercial success and, as well as the regular original US pressing, Delicious Vinyl released a version on chrome picture disc which has always been very hard to find. This, however, is one of those releases where collectors need to beware and tread with caution – often the Traffic reissue from 2012, which was pressed on grey/chrome vinyl (not a picture disc), is mistakenly sold as the original.

INSANE MACBETH

The Retardation Project

(INSANE LP 01, white-label promo, UK, 2000) **£300**

Having worked with Kinetic Effect during the 90s, the late, great Insane Macbeth, a UK hip hop pioneer who emerged from South London, released his solo album at the turn of the millennium. Sadly, it was only ever pressed in a small quantity (150 white labels) and as a consequence has always been highly sought-after. The allure is also, in part, due to the quality of collaboration with UK legends such as MC Crazy Noddy and HQ Squad affiliates including Hunt Finn, Shaka Shazzam and The Icepick.

ATMOSPHERE

Sad Clown, Bad Dub II

(Rhymesayers, no Cat no, US, 2000) **£100**

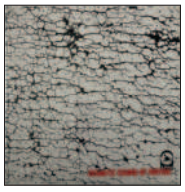
Minneapolis legends Atmosphere must have one of the longest LP discographies in hip hop, with over 15 official album releases since 1997. In 1999, at the same time as their better-known product for companies such as Fat Beats and their own Rhymesayers label, they embarked on a series called "Sad Clown, Bad Dub", referring to the fact that they were not mastered and often recorded on a 4-track. Part Two of the series has always been very sought-after because it's a complete album with unique tracks as opposed to Parts One, Three and Four which are predominantly compilations of existing tracks, live or on DVD. After Part Four, the series would continue but became an additional outlet for fully mastered new Atmosphere material. The album was reissued in 2003 – originals are pressed on a Princo CD-R with numbered artwork.

UNIQUE

Die Hard

(Diggers With Gratitude DWG 003, EP, UK, 2008) **£125**

It's not strictly an LP, but this is the only true vinyl representation of possibly the most expensive rap record ever [*give or take the Wu-Tang Clan's* Once Upon A Time In Shaolin – *Ed*]: Unique's *Die Hard* album, which only exists in test-pressing form. In fact, there may only be one copy in existence, though this is not known for sure. Those wonderful people at Diggers With Gratitude pressed up four of the album's tracks on this EP (three of its tracks had already been released as singles and the other two can be found on various lathe-cut bootlegs). Although it's an EP, this release is a great way to get to the essence of hip hop's holy grail. See *RC* 376 where Chris Aylen goes into more depth about the original test pressing. Diggers With Gratitude revived two of the tracks – Die Hard and War Rap – on a 2019 45 (DWG 7016).



CAPPO

Dramatic Change Of Fortune

(YNR YNR 068, UK, 2016) **£50**

For our final album we turn to a relatively recent release by Nottingham veteran Cappo. This album slipped out on Jehst's label YNR Recordings with a pressing of only 100. Though plentiful in CD guise, it's been very hard to source on vinyl since, with prices beginning to rise from a £50 baseline to a more eye-watering £75. As with all of Cappo's back catalogue, which stretches back to the late 90s, this album sold out fast and saw the Nottingham MC push the art-form envelope even further on Boozehawk, Calf and Air. Cappo has continued in this vein to the present, collaborating with labels such as Boot and Village Live.

HEY JUDY

DAVE GUARD & THE WHISKEYHILL SINGERS

(Capitol T 1728/ST 1728, mono/stereo, US, 1962)
£15/£20

The death in April of American folk/jazz/blues singer Judy Henske calls to mind the post-Seeger, pre-Dylan period of the early 60s. A feature of the US folk scene of the period was the proliferation of primarily young, white singers and groups who filled the cafés and coffeehouses on open-mic evenings, performing songs such as Darlin' Cory, Down By The Riverside and Swing Low Sweet Chariot, all hoping for that big break. Folk evenings were "hootenannies" and compilation albums such as the 1962 release *Hoot Tonite!* (Warner Bros WS 1512, US, £5) were a fixture of the period.

The catalyst for this movement had been the enormous success of the single Tom Dooley by The Kingston Trio. It was a massive hit in the US, with frequent airplay across the country. The Trio, with their handsome, white-college-boy looks, all stripey shirts, guitars and banjos, would spawn a seemingly endless trail of similar groups: The Tarriers, Chad Mitchell Trio, Modern Folk Quartet, Brothers Four, New Christy Minstrels and many others. Music stores were cleaned out of long-necked five-string banjos, and many of these acts would fill record store racks with albums of tried and tested folk fare.

After a couple of years, founder member Dave Guard began to feel that the Trio's music was becoming too safe and predictable. He sought to move away from the fairly standard folk repertoire towards something more edgy, more social and political. He quit and formed a new group, inviting David "Buck" Wheat, the Trio's bassist, to come with him. A Texan musicologist, Wheat was a member of the beat generation and had at one time played with Chet Baker.

Another invitation went out to Iranian-born Cyrus Faryar. Son of a diplomat and a showgirl, Faryar had been a year behind Guard at Honolulu's Punahou School, and had ended up owning and running the city's Greensleeves coffeehouse, which became a mecca for all manner of folkies. He'd relocated to the US and was actually in Phoenix when Guard phoned to offer him a place in his new band, to be named The Whiskeyhill Singers, after the Woodside/Whiskeyhill area of California, a favourite spot.

And it was Faryar who then persuaded Guard to go and see a tall, dark-haired young singer with a powerful voice and great stage presence. She was also extremely sharp and witty, her humour decidedly offbeat. This was Judy Henske from Wisconsin, and Guard was knocked out by her energy, voice and (in reviewer Barry Alfonso's words) "rollicking charisma". He had no hesitation in recruiting her, feeling that her female voice and presence would distance them from the run-of-the-mill and mostly all-male folk groups.

They released their eponymous album in 1962. Guard provided the liner notes, outlining the mission statement: "We've tried to make our musical base as wide as possible… There is such a wealth of material from every inhabited spot on the earth, and from any time in history, that we've just got to try everything we think we can do justice to."

The album kicks off with that 19th century murder ballad Banks Of The Ohio, followed by Woody Guthrie's Plane Wreck At Los Gatos (Deportees), about the tragic deaths of Mexican migrant workers.

The oft-recorded Ewan MacColl classic The Bonnie Ship, The Diamond is about whale fishing in the 1820s, and Faryar would sing it some 15 years later as part of the MFQ's repertoire.

And in keeping with Guard's desire to draw on the entire world for their music, Shine The Light On Me (Salomila) enjoys, say his liner notes, "A Samoan title, talks about a Japanese delicacy, has a Puerto Rican beat, has some lyrics from the Bahamas, and is played on Spanish and Italian instruments."

Judy Henske delivers a powerful rendition of the Bessie Smith classic, Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out, and the album closes with When The War Breaks Out In Mexico, a rousing Civil War tune specially written for the Singers.

The group contributed to the soundtrack album of the early widescreen Cinerama movie, *How The West Was Won.* MGM originally wanted The Kingston Trio, but changed their minds when they learned Guard had a new group. Several songs were recorded, including The Erie Canal, 900 Mile and The Ox Driver.

A second album's worth of material was recorded but never saw the light of day. Internal relationships quickly fractured the group. Henske left in July 1962, to be replaced by Liz Seneff, but within a couple of months the group had split and gone their separate ways. In a 1990 interview with Gavan Daws for the US magazine *Goldmine*, Faryar explained that, in his view, the basis for the premature breakup lay in the strong personality clashes of Guard and Henske.

"They were towering infernos," he recalled, "one at either end of the group [Guard was six-foot-four, Henske six-foot]. In between there's me, around five-foot-six, and Buck Wheat, about the same height and rotund. And there, a head and a half above us, are Dave and Judy, glaring at each other, necks engorged, veins popping, mouths wide open and enormous sounds coming out of them, purporting to be their parts of our lovingly arranged harmonies, songs of brotherhood and goodwill. And down in the lowlands are Bucky and me, going about our meek peasant-like folkie business, forever getting trapped in the crossfire. Jesus, what a memory. Massacre time."

Faryar joined the Modern Folk Quartet alongside Henry Diltz, Chip Douglas and Jerry Yester, and would record and perform with the group for the next 40 years and more. He produced for the Firesign Theatre and released two solo albums in the 70s. Buck Wheat went on to arrange for the folk duo, Bud & Travis. He died in 1985. Guard spent some time in Australia, keeping active musically, and at one point had his own TV show, *Dave's Place.* By the end of the decade, however, he was back in the States. He died from cancer in 1991 and is generally regarded as a major figure in the American folk scene of the 50s and 60s.

As for Henske, she made three fine albums for Elektra, including a concert LP which displayed her acerbic humour, intellect and powerful voice. The former "queen of the beatniks", as producer Jack Nitzsche labelled her, proved she could cover folk, jazz, rock and blues with astonishing prowess and versatility.

Henkse died on 27 April 2022, aged 85. Elektra boss Jac Holzman described her as "totally authentic and herself… skilled at ingesting new material and making it work for her".

David Pearson

LABEL OF LOVE
ICONOCLASSIC RECORDS

Q&A **Label boss Jeremy Holiday**
Interview: Charles Donovan

Holiday, July 2021: "The label name captures our ethos"

Where are you based, what do you do, and why?
Iconoclassic Records is a US-based label specialising in rock, pop, and R&B reissues. We focus on notable albums previously unreleased on CD, as well as popular out-of-print records. We emphasise sound quality and work with acclaimed engineers to create definitive remasters.

Why the name?
It captures our ethos. Iconoclassic Records reissues classic music by iconic artists, many of whom have handled their careers in an uncompromising, iconoclastic manner. The label launched with a reissue by Laura Nyro, an artist who defines what it means to be Iconoclassic, and recently relaunched with an album by Graham Parker who embodies that same quality.

When did you launch it, and how have things changed since?
The label launched in 2008 and pretty much everything about the music industry has changed since then. Thankfully, we're now seeing a renewed appreciation for physical music formats including the CD, which is our preferred canvas on which to work. Sadly, our founding president, Frank Ursoleo, recently passed away. But our work continues in Frank's honour, guided by the principles he established.

What were your influences?
Rhino, Legacy, and Universal's Chronicles division were our primary influences. As the major labels shifted their focus away from individual album reissues on CD, Iconoclassic sought to carry that category forward while maintaining the same level of quality in sound and presentation. Along with the sense of fun and discovery.

Who are your competitors?
We don't view them as competition, since each label's focus is slightly different, but we respect labels like Intervention Records, Rubellan Remasters, and Second Disc Records as peers and sources of inspiration. All are driven by passionate individuals with a deserved reputation for doing great work.

Any advice for someone who wants to start their own label?
Don't cut corners because your reputation is all you have. After the label's relaunch was announced, a fan commented online, "It's nice to have a label I feel like I can trust active again." That means everything to us.

What's been your highest high?
The label's highest high was when it was able to license several Robin Trower titles from Capitol/EMI. The albums had been out of print for some time and sold very well and very quickly.

… And your lowest low?
Would be the same Trower titles – Iconoclassic quickly lost the licences when EMI was sold and the rights to the albums changed hands.

What album, from any period, do you wish you could have released, and why?
I'm a massive fan of the Jethro Tull "book-set" reissue series, the ultimate in intelligently presented album expansions from sound to packaging to annotation. I'd have loved to have been involved with the forthcoming *The Broadsword And The Beast* set. That period in Tull's history is so rich, with an astonishing number of worthwhile bonus tracks. The team that works on the book-sets is doing a phenomenal job and certainly doesn't need any help, though!

Who would be your dream reissue?
Gino Vannelli's never-released early 80s album *Twisted Heart* is something Iconoclassic would love to release and which our audience would embrace. Happily, several of our dream reissues are now becoming reality, including upcoming projects with Dwight Twilley and Steve Arrington.

How do you plan what to reissue?
We look for albums which haven't yet been presented with the care they deserve. Our recent BT Express reissue is a perfect example. *Do It ('Til You're Satisfied)* was a Top 5 pop/No 1 R&B album in the US, with two Top 5 pop singles (both No 1 R&B hits). Yet it's had a very messy history on CD, with altered cover art, reshuffled track sequences, reversed channels and, worst of all, edited song lengths. That's the last thing a listener wants from a funk album! Plus the band's story hadn't previously been told in any depth within liner notes. Recognising and then addressing these kinds of albums or catalogues is what this label most loves doing.

Where would a newcomer start with your label?
Our new 2CD deluxe edition of *The Light User Syndrome* by The Fall. Who's more Iconoclassic than Mark E Smith? I'm very proud of this one. It's the original 1996 album plus an hour's worth of bonus tracks, all remastered by Andy Pearce and Matt Wortham. Plus a definitive 6,500-word oral history and timeline by Daryl Easlea that's worth the price of admission on its own. He fully illuminates a critical year in the lifespan of The Fall. That's housed in a 24-page booklet designed by Edward ODowd of Psychic TV. This is what we mean by Reissues Done Right.

And what can long-time fans look forward to?
A recommitment to the label's core values. More frequent new releases. Definitive remasterings. Albums for the first time on CD, or first time on CD from master tapes. Previously unreleased music. Sleeve-notes revealing previously untold stories. Attractive designs including our well-loved original label recreations. Everything that first made you fall in love with catalogue reissues.

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11 ICONOCLASSIC HIGHLIGHTS ON CD

04/08	ICON 1001	LAURA NYRO	*Nested*
07/09	ICON 1009	JEFFERSON AIRPLANE	*Thirty Seconds Over Winterland*
09/09	ICON 1012	ISLEY JASPER ISLEY	*Broadway's Closer To Sunset Blvd*
04/10	ICON 1017	ROBIN TROWER	*Twice Removed From Yesterday*
06/11	ICON 1022	THE GUESS WHO	*Flavours*
11/12	ICON 1031	CANNED HEAT	*Boogie With Canned Heat*
04/13	ICON 1033	THE TUBES	*Remote Control*
11/13	ICON 1035	POCO	*From The Inside*
04/22	ICON 1050	GRAHAM PARKER	Another Grey Area
05/22	ICON 1051	BT EXPRESS	*Do It ('Til You're Satisfied)*
07/22	ICON 1052	THE FALL	*The Light User Syndrome* (2CD Deluxe Edition)

Photo (Jeremy Holiday): Tara Quinn/Essential Hudson Valley

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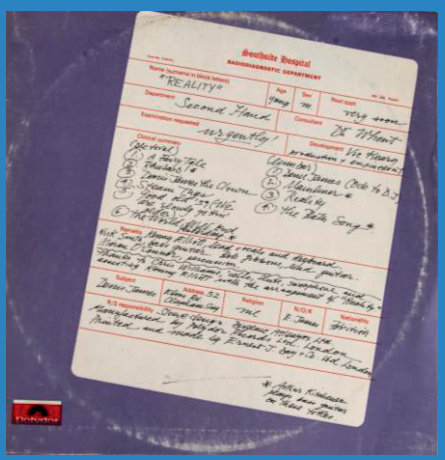

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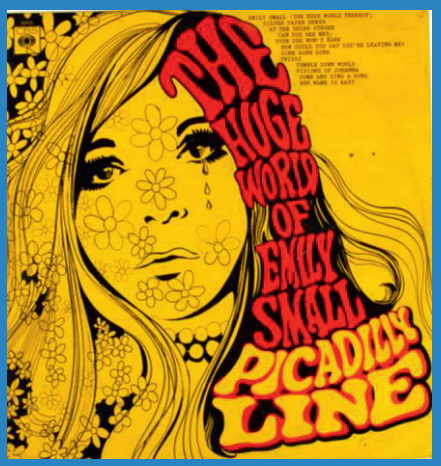

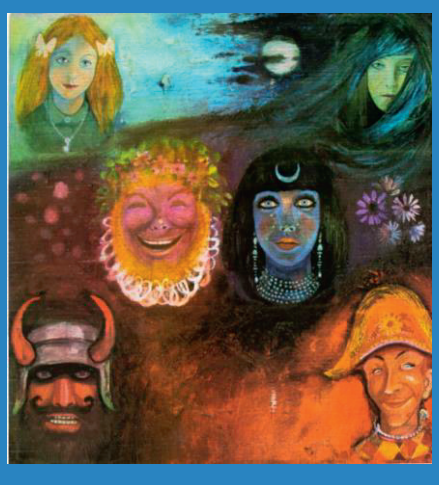

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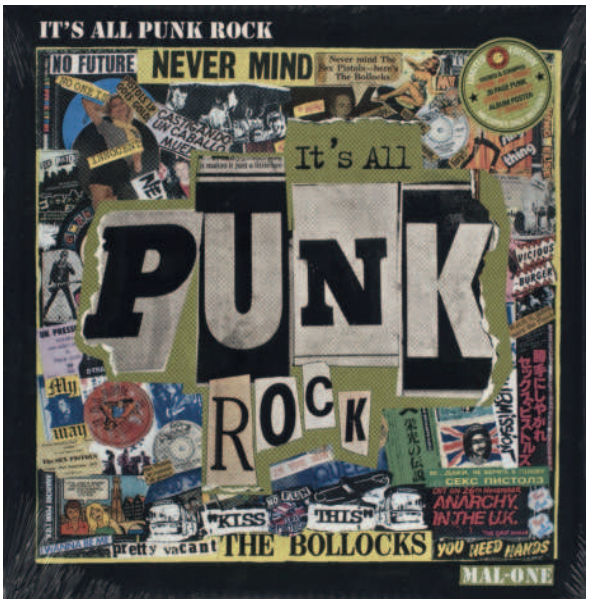
MOST Wanted

From Bears and Eagles to Beatles, Paul Rigby gets his teeth, beak and rather attractive antennae into the top collectables, this month

Now includes Whole Love Of Lots

PAUL MCCARTNEY *McCartney III* £2,995
The 333 Edition sold only via Third Man Records' online store and was limited to 333 copies. It was created using 33 recycled vinyl copies of *McCartney* and *McCartney II*. Complete with inner sleeve and fold-out poster.
Supplied by 991

THE DAMNED Programme £125
A 20-page Chelsea v Wolves football programme from 1976 featuring an advertisement for The Damned's single, New Rose. The only football programme from this era with a Damned advert. It was a 3-3 draw, incidentally; Ray "Butch" Wilkins was among the scorers. It was quite a game.
Supplied by 991



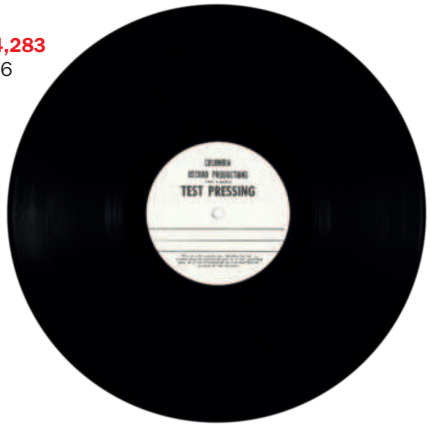
MAL-ONE It's All Punk Rock (PunkArt LP001) £95
Limited-edition UK release from 2021. This 16-track vinyl release features a bonus 7" of It's All Punk Rock (Full Version) plus booklet and poster. From the London-based musician/artist. Only 20 hand-numbered copies were issued. **Supplied by 991**

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Violin £3,750
A Hans Lewicki-made violin from 1900, as used by Fairport fiddler Dave Swarbrick during his later years and played up until his death in 2016.
Supplied by Bonhams

THE BEATLES Cel £8,925
A multi-layered animation cel from the Eleanor Rigby sequence in the film, *Yellow Submarine*. Comprising three separate cels: terraced houses, the face of a motorcyclist, and a tiger motif on his helmet.
Supplied by Bonhams

PRETTY THINGS Poster £475
A suitably trippy poster for this eclectic 1969 gathering at York University. **Supplied by MEM**

EAGLES Test Pressing $4,283
A test pressing for the 1976 album, *Hotel California*. The accompanying cover is signed by Glen Frey, Don Felder, Joe Walsh, Don Henley and Randy Meisner. Felder also added the inscription, "Dear John – Thanks From The Eagles." **Supplied by Hake's Auctions**



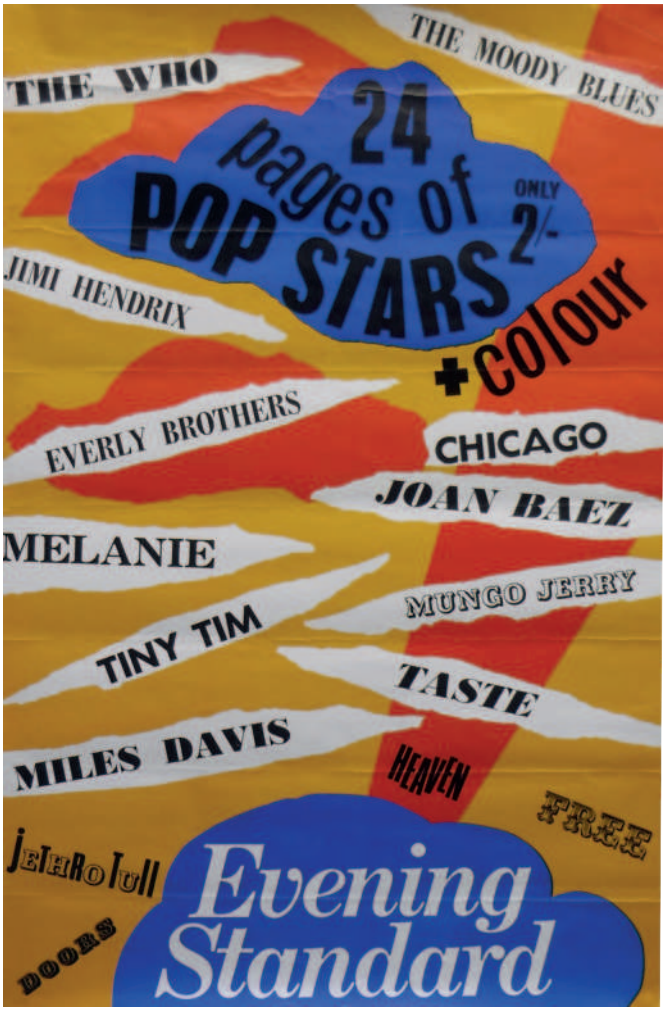
ANDWELLAS DREAM Demo (CBS 4469) £100
Demo of the 7" single, released in 1969, complete with original sleeve featuring Mrs Man and Felix on the flip. **Supplied by SAS**

THEM/TOM JONES/THE SHIRELLES Poster $1,045
Cardboard poster from 1965 featuring Them as headliners, just a year into their career. This is a concert that rewarded those who pre-bought their tickets. **Supplied by Hake's Auctions**

BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS Poster £1,402
This show was part of their *Burnin'* Tour but was apparently cancelled. **Supplied by Bonhams**

FUCHSIA *Fuchsia* (Pegasus PEG 8) £360
Released in 1971, this UK issue includes a combination of folk-rock and prog with a string section backing, adding orchestral depth.
Supplied by SAS

JIMI HENDRIX/THE WHO/JETHRO TULL Poster £195
The Evening Standard promoted the 1970 Isle of Wight festival with their Rupert The Bear souvenir programme. This is the poster for that promotion.
Supplied by MEM



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Send your Most Wanted suggestions to paulrigby@theaudiophileman.com

WHOLE LOVE OF LOTS

This month's big scorers online

LEE MORGAN *Vol.3* (Blue Note 1557) £4,496
First press, mono jazz release featuring Gigi Grace and Benny Golsen. (eBay item number: 275226973870) **Supplied by eBay**

DON RENDELL/IAN CARR *Shades Of Blue* (Columbia 33 SX 1733) £3,975
UK mono jazz pressing, signed by Rendell on the rear sleeve. (eBay item number: 304363893680) **Supplied by eBay**

U2 Promo Set £3,800
Four 7" singles. Presented on yellow and orange vinyl, release in Ireland only. (eBay item number: 313939075678) **Supplied by eBay**

ELVIS PRESLEY *Elvis At Madison Square Garden* £375
Features a hardback book plus a CD. (eBay item number: 284643166597) **Supplied by eBay**

THE DAMNED *Damned Damned Damned* (Stiff SEEZ 1) £2,550
Still sealed first pressing with red lettering on the shrink-wrap.
Supplied by Popsike

THE QUEERS Love Me (Doheny no cat no) £2,438
Six-track 7" EP punk outing with handwritten sleeve.
Supplied by Popsike

THE VIOLATORS N.Y. Ripper (Syringe FRS 002) $1,850
US-based punk outfit and their 1980 7" single release.
Supplied by Discogs

THE WHO *The Who Sell Out* (Track 613 002) $1,896
The band's 1967 release from the UK label. **Supplied by Discogs**

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CRSEGBOX112

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SIRIUS SOUNDS
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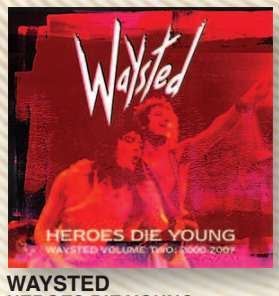

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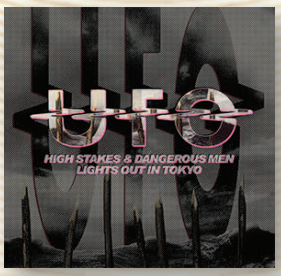

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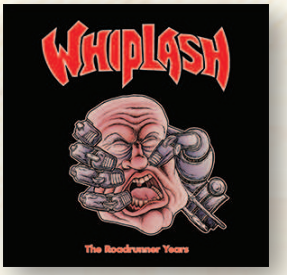

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Not Forgotten

Chairman of the keyboard: the sonically versatile Vangelis

Vangelis died 17 May, age 79. Though the Greek musician and composer Vangelis successfully traversed a range of styles as a solo artist and band member – his music encompassing pop, rock,electronic, jazz, classical music and beyond – he remains best remembered for his film soundtracks. Grounded in his trailblazing use of synthesisers, his best scores transcended their allotted roles. The towering, Oscar-winning theme he created for Hugh Hudson's *Chariots Of Fire* (1981), a film about the 1924 Paris Olympics, came to epitomise sporting success and was later used in medal ceremonies at the London 2012 Olympics; in Ridley Scott's dystopian sci fi masterwork *Blade Runner* (1982) Vangelis' dark, emotionally-rich synth themes are as crucial to the film's enduring greatness as Harrison Ford or Rutger Hauer's performances – effectively acting as another character in the movie.

Born Evángelos Papathanassíou in the coastal town of Agria and raised in Athens, he began playing the piano alongside assorted other instruments at the age of four. Acquiring a love of rock and jazz while at school, he formed the pop-rock band Forminx in 1963 who released a number of singles and found success in Europe before splitting in 1966.

Moving to Paris, he founded the group Aphrodite's Child alongside Demis Roussos and other Greek expats the following year. After they signed to Mercury Records, their debut single Rain And Tears proved a pan-European hit. The group's third record, *666*, was a hugely ambitious double concept album based on the *Book Of Revelation*. Though it was to prove their final effort, the 1972 release has built a reputation as a prog-rock classic.

Meanwhile, the composer had been busy accruing a name as a soundtrack composer with scores for the films *Sex Power* (1970), *Salut, Jerusalem* (1972) and *Amore* (1974). Put together for a French nature documentary in 1970 and gaining release in 1973, *L'Apocalypse Des Animaux* showed his early mastery of synth textures.

His solo career kicked off with 1972's *Fais Que Ton Rêve Sois Plus Long Que La Nuit* and the following year's *Earth*. He auditioned to replace departing keyboardist Rick Wakeman in prog group Yes in 1974 but was forced to turn their offer down over problems with work permits.

Moving to London in 1975, he set up new 16-track studio, Nemo Studios, in his Marble Arch flat. Securing a recording deal with RCA Records, he released a series of increasingly successful electronic records, with 1975's *Heaven And Hell* (which featured Yes singer Jon Anderson) followed by *Albedo 0.39*, which cracked the UK Top 20.

Other late 70s efforts such as the avant-garde-leaning *Beaubourg* and 1979's *China*, which employed Chinese instruments and compositional styles, showcased his sonic versatility. Teaming up with Yes' Jon Anderson once more as the duo Jon and Vangelis, their debut album, *Short Stories* (1980), reached No 4 in the UK. They would go on to release three more albums together.

Vangelis' reputation as a soundtrack composer, which had been gaining ground with scores for nature documentaries *La Fête Sauvage* (1976) and *Opéra Sauvage* (1979), increased considerably – along with his public profile – after he teamed up with director Hugh Hudson for 1981's *Chariots Of Fire*. The film's opening theme reached No 12 in the UK and topped the charts in the US in 1982, and the soundtrack album also hit No 1 in the US. Released the same year, his work for the film *Blade Runner* blended dream-like ambient passages with pitch-black synth lines to help bring Ridley Scott's bleakly futuristic vision of LA to life.

Although he was keen to avoid being pigeonholed as a movie composer, he would continue to compose much-lauded and high-profile scores over the years including a Palme d'Or-winning soundtrack for Costa-Gavras' *Missing* (1982), Ridley Scott's *1492: Conquest Of Paradise* (1992), Roman Polanski's *Bitter Moon* (1992) and Oliver Stone's *Alexander* (2004).

Elsewhere, he released a steady stream of solo albums alongside choral symphonies, theatre and stage productions and themes for sporting events such as the 2004 Olympics in Athens. His final studio album, 2021's *Juno To Jupiter*, was inspired by NASA's space probe, Juno.

Paul Bowler

HIS MUSIC ENCOMPASSED POP, JAZZ AND CLASSICAL

IN VINYL MEMORIAM

Vangelis
Blade Runner Trilogy, 25th Anniversary
(Universal Music TV – 060075305147(4), Europe, CDX3, 2007) **£20**

Vangelis' soundtrack to Ridley's Scott's sci-fi film has had a patchy release history. The first version, issued in 1982, was an orchestral adaptation by The New American Orchestra. Many fans waiting patiently for a legal release were left disappointed by the one he finally put out in 1994, which eschewed large portions of the original score.

Released to coincide with the film's 25-year anniversary this 3CD set is perhaps the greatest iteration, adding previously unreleased mood pieces like Dr. Tyrell's Death, timeless classics like the jazz-tinged Love Theme, the Middle Eastern futurama of Tales Of The Future and the dreamily beautiful synth and piano piece Memories Of Green. Still as powerful today as the moment it was created, Vangelis' synth soundscapes, by turns dark, eerie, warm, and nostalgic, have become a touchstone of sci-fi soundtracks, influencing artists from the diverse fields of hip hop, ambient and electronica.

Paul Bowler

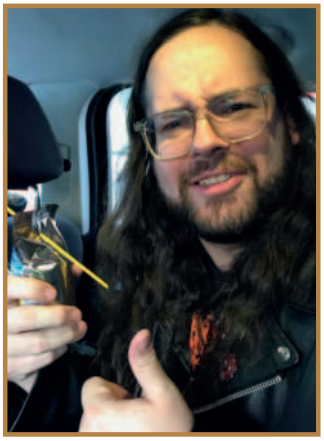
Cathal Coughlan: "Multi-hued and often abrasive"

Cathal Coughlan died 18 May, age 61. Renowned for the idiosyncratic brilliance of his lyrics, the Irish singer-songwriter's music covered a range of styles and textures. He first came to prominence as the frontman of Microdisney, whom he formed in Cork in 1980 with fellow songwriter Sean O'Hagan, later of The High Llamas. Moving to London in 1983, they signed to Rough Trade Records, who issued their debut album *Everybody Is Fantastic* the following year. Though the group never quite fit within the post-punk musical landscape their melodic pop, a deceptively pretty carapace for Coughlan's acerbic lyrics, was admired by many including John Peel for whom they recorded several sessions. After the group disbanded in 1988, he formed Fatima Mansions with whom he pursued a multi-hued and often abrasive sound that combined industrial strains of rock and synthpop with diversions into folk and balladry over acclaimed albums such as *Viva Dead Ponies* (1990) and *Valhalla Avenue* (1992), their final recordings arriving in 1994. Later work included a series of solo albums – his most recent being 2021's *Song of Co-Aklan* – and a series of collaborations including *North Sea Scrolls*, a concept album recorded with *RC*'s Luke Haines and journalist/author Andrew Mueller.

Ricky Gardiner died 13 May, age 73. The Scottish guitarist played on key recordings by David Bowie and Iggy Pop. A self-taught musician, he co-formed the prog group Beggars Opera in 1969. He played on six of the band's albums in total, leaving after 1975's *Beggars Can't Be Choosers*. At producer Tony Visconti's suggestion, he took part in recording sessions for Bowie's *Low* (1977), playing lead guitar on the first half of the album, leading to his enlistment for Bowie co-conspirator Iggy Pop's touring band in support of *The Idiot*. A largely abstinent foil to Pop's wild man character, the pair became close, and Gardiner would made significant contributions to Pop's Bowie-produced album *Lust for Life*, writing The Passenger, co-writing Success and Neighbourhood Threat, and playing lead guitar on tracks such as Lust For Life. As a new father he declined the offer to tour in support of the album but continued to create meditation- and electronic-focused music as a solo artist.

Andrew Woolfolk died 24 April, age 71. Pictured above, the American saxophonist was a longtime member of Earth, Wind & Fire. He joined the band in 1972 and made his first appearance on the following year's *Head To The Sky* album. He would remain an ever-present member outside of the group's two-year 80s hiatus until 1993. Woolfolk's tenure coincided with the group's most acclaimed period. He featured on such classics as September, Shining Star, and Boogie Wonderland. He also performed as a session and touring player for the likes of Phil Collins, Level 42, and Deniece Williams.

Con Cluskey died 8 April, age 80. The singer was a member of Irish vocal trio The Bachelors. Formed in Dublin in the 1950s, initially as The Harmonichords, the group gained international success the following decade, their single Diane, topping the UK charts and reaching the US Top 10 in 1964. Other 60s hits included I Believe, Charmaine, and I Wouldn't Trade You For The World.



Trevor Strnad died 11 May, age 41. The vocalist (above) was best known as a co-founder member of US death metal band The Black Dahlia Murder. Amid ever-evolving line-ups – Strnad and guitarist Brian Eschbach were the only ever-present members – the group released nine studio albums, beginning with 2003's *Unhallowed* and ending with 2019's *Verminous*. The group were one of the American extreme metal scene's most popular groups, with 2011's *Ritual* album reaching No 31 in the US chart.

Ray Fenwick died 30 April, age 75. The guitarist and songwriter's early career included a stint with English beat group The Syndicats (whom he joined in 1964) and Dutch group Tee-Set. He was a member of The Spencer Davis Group from 1967 to 1969, writing all the songs on the group's album *Letters From Edith* (1969). In the 70s he was a member The Ian Gillan Band and the pop group Fancy, and in the following decade he linked up with the likes of Black Sabbath's Tony Martin and Rainbow's Cozy Powell with his studio project Forcefield.

Naomi Judd died 30 April, age 76. The US singer-songwriter (above) was one half of the mother-daughter country duo The Judds. Releasing six albums, beginning with 1984's *Why Not Me* and ending with 1990's *Love Can Build a Bridge*, they sold more than 20 million records and won five Grammy awards. Naomi was forced to retire for health reasons, and the duo disbanded in 1991, though they reunited for concerts.

Paul Siebel died 5 April, age 84. The US folk singer was a notable presence on the 60s Greenwich Village scene. Signed to Elektra, 1970's *Woodsmoke & Oranges* was the first of three albums (including a live effort) which fused folk with country. Though the albums sold poorly, his music proved popular with fellow artists, with the likes of Linda Ronstadt, Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris covering his songs.

Susan Jacks died 25 April, age 73. The Canadian singer-songwriter and producer (above) was best-known as the lead vocalist of psych-pop band The Poppy Family. Released in 1969, their debut album spawned the US No 2 hit Which Way You Goin' Billy? *Poppy Seeds* followed in 1971 before she began a solo career, releasing several albums in the 70s.

Gabe Serbian died 30 April, age 44. The American drummer, guitarist and vocalist was a long-time member of San Diego hardcore punk band The Locust. He joined the group in 1998 and played guitar on their self-titled debut album that year. Switching to drums, he appeared on two further albums, 2003's *Plague Soundscapes* and 2007's *New Erections*. Outside of The Locust, he played in the groups Cattle Decapitation, Le Butcherettes and Zu.

Jimmy Thomas died 25 April, age 83. The US R&B singer and songwriter joined Ike Turner's Kings Of Rhythm group in 1958, making his recording debut with them for Cobra Records. He was a member of Ike & Tina Turner Revue when it formed in 1960. During his time with them, he released solo singles on Sue, Sputnik, Mirwood and Sonja Records. Later relocating to London, he recorded the Northern Soul classic, The Beautiful Night, in 1969. He released the solo album, *Abyss,* in 1973 and formed a record label, Osceola Records, in 1979. *Tony Burke*

Photos: (Cathal Coughlan) Gregory Dunn; (Andrew Woolfolk) Facebook; (Trevor Strnad) Artists's Twitter

Tommy McConnell died 28 February, age unknown. The US drummer and songwriter was a co-founding member of R&B band Skyy. Signed to Salsoul, they scored hits including 1981's Call Me, which reached US No 26. After a number of fallow years, the group made a successful comeback in the late 80s with two R&B chart-toppers, Real Love and Start of A Romance, the latter penned by McConnell.

Randy Rand died 26 April, age 62. The US bassist was a founding member of 80s glam metal band Autograph. The group gained early fame after Van Halen's lead singer David Lee Roth asked them to open for his group after hearing a demo. Signed to RCA Victor on the strength of the shows, debut album *Sign In Please* (1984), and its single Turn Up the Radio, both reached the US Top 30. Two further albums, *That's the Stuff* (1985) and *Loud and Clear* (1987), failed to replicate its success and the band split in 1989.

Ric Parnell died 1 May, age 70. The drummer (above) was best known for his appearance as Mick Shrimpton in the film *This Is Spinal Tap*. One of several ill-fated drummers in the 1984 mockumentary, he famously "exploded" onstage at the end of the movie. Other than his involvement with the film, which also involved world tours and a 1992 album named *Break Like The Wind*, he was also a member of Atomic Rooster from 1970-1973 and played on Toni Basil's 1981 album *Word Of Mouth*, which included the UK No 2 (and US chart-topping) single Mickey.

Dennis Waterman died 8 May, age 74. *The Sweeney, Minder* and *New Tricks* TV actor scored a number of hits as a vocalist, including I Could Be So Good for You, his theme song for *Minder* which reached UK No 3 in 1980.

Howie Pyro died 4 May, age 61. The American bassist (above) was one of the original punk rockers, leading the underage group The Blessed, who played Max's Kansas City and CBGB. In 1991 he co-formed punk band D Generation who released their self-titled debut album in 1994. Signing to Columbia, they released 1996's *No Lunch* and 1999's *Through The Darkness*. They disbanded in 1999, but later reformed and released a final album, *Nothing Is Anywhere* (2016).

Norman Dolph died 11 May, age 83. The US polymath was best-known for his work on The Velvet Underground's debut album. Based in New York and working at Columbia Records as a salesman by day, in the evenings he ran a mobile disco (one of America's first) which played at art events. At one of these he met Andy Warhol, who introduced him to the then-unknown Velvet Underground. Using Scepter Records' Manhattan studio, he recorded nine tracks with them. His takes of All Tomorrow's Parties, European Son, Femme Fatale, Run Run Run, I'll Be Your Mirror and The Black Angel's Death Song all ended up on the group's 1967 debut, *The Velvet Underground & Nico*. Though his bosses at Columbia passed after he handed them the acetate, it ended up being released by MGM's jazz imprint Verve. Later changing to a career as a songwriter, he co-wrote the 1974 hit Life Is A Rock (But the Radio Rolled Me) for studio group Reunion.

Dennis Walker died 14 May, age 79. The US blues producer, songwriter and bassist began playing and producing 45s with LA blues artists in the 60s. In 1986 he produced the hit album *Strong Persuader* for Robert Cray and produced for BB King. *Tony Burke*

Judy Henske: "The Queen of the Beatniks"

Judy Henske died 27 April, age 85. Dubbed 'The Queen Of The Beatniks' by producer Jack Nitzsche, the US singer and songwriter was an influential presence on the 60s folk scene and beyond. Noted for her charisma and sarcastic wit – Woody Allen, who shared a stage with her, reportedly drew on Henske's character for Annie Hall – her music blended folk with jazz, blues and show tunes. Among her releases was 1963's High Flying Bird – a song which would prove influential on the emergent folk-rock genre – and *Farewell Aldebaran*, a psych-infused 1969 album released with husband Jerry Yester.

Bert Ruiter died 24 March, age 75. The Netherlands-born bassist played with Dutch prog group Focus between 1971 and their disbandment in 1978. He then joined Earth & Fire, a band which also featured his wife, the vocalist Jerney Kaagman. Ruiter later worked with Kaagman as producer and arranger on her solo albums.

Mickey Gilley died 7 May, age 86. The US singer had a string of country hits in the 70s and 80s including Room Full Of Roses, Don't The Girls All Get Prettier At Closing Time, and a cover of the soul hit Stand By Me. Known as the "world's biggest honky-tonk" his Texas club, Gilley's, inspired the 1980 film *Urban Cowboy*.

Benjamin Moore, Jr died 12 May, age 80. The US singer and guitarist's lengthy career took in stints with 60s groups Jimmy Tig and the Rounders, Ben And Spence and James & Bobby Purify. After releasing solo albums in the 70s and 80s he joined The Blind Boys Of Alabama in 2006, going on to spend 14 years with the gospel band.

Others who passed away recently include: **Charles McCormick**, lead singer and bassist for US R&B, soul, and funk group Bloodstone; **Arno**, Belgian singer known as the frontman of 80s band TC Matic who also enjoyed a prolific solo career; **Chu Kosaka**, Japanese singer-songwriter, composer and singer who played with The Floral, Apryl Fool and recorded as a solo artist; **Roland Hyams**, much-loved rock PR agent for Ozzy Osbourne, Iron Maiden, W.A.S.P., and The Stranglers; **Regine**, French singer, actress and self-proclaimed inventor of the discotheque; **Allan "Grip" Smith**, keyboardist for The SOS Band, producer for Keith Sweat and TLC; **Walter Rossi**, Italian-Canadian guitarist who played with Wilson Pickett and The Buddy Miles Express; **Jewell**, US vocalist with Death Row Records who sang on albums by Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, and 2Pac; **Paul Plimley**, Canadian free jazz pianist and vibraphonist; **Henny Vrienten**, Dutch musician known as the lead singer and bassist of 80s ska-pop band Doe Maar; **Vyto Beleska**, underground Lithuanian-American artist who released music from the 70s onwards; **Seán Garvey**, Irish traditional singer and musician; **Teddy Toi**, New Zealand bass player for Billy Thorpe & The Aztecs and Max Merritt & The Meteors; **Lil Keed**, Atlanta rapper; **Helen Wooten**, US music promoter, booker, and manager who worked with The Jackson 5, The Temptations and The Chi-Lites.

All obits by Paul Bowler unless otherwise stated.

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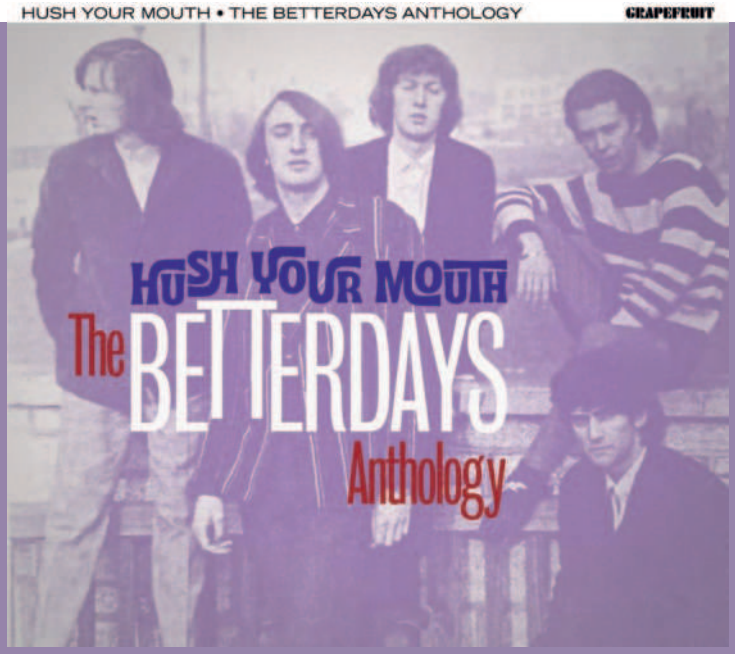

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Bob Stanley carries pop's baggage everywhere

Finding gold in them there racks

My Saturday job at the turn of the 80s was working on Croydon's Surrey Street market, and the stall I worked at just happened to be a couple of doors along from the fabled Beanos, Britain's biggest second-hand record shop. I could not only pick up brand-new albums like *More Specials* cheaply, thanks to the number of music journalists in the Greater Croydon area, but also investigate the entire history of pop. At that point it spanned all of 25 years.

One day in 1980 I picked up six albums called *The Golden Years Of Rock'n'Roll*, a set which went as far back as 1948 for Amos Milburn's Chicken Shack Boogie and as late as 1964 for the Crickets' English language version of La Bamba. The meat of it, though, was 1955 to 1962, which still feels like the parameters of rock'n'roll for me – any earlier and it's proto-rock, any later and you're getting into dubious "rock'n'roll lifestyle" territory, which has bugger-all to do with The Monotones' Book Of Love or Sandy Nelson's Teen Beat.

These albums were all 80p each and had clearly been broken up from a box set. They had that strange, gaudy, overly ripe 70s-does-50s look, a very specific look which Guy Peellaert turned into his *Rock Dreams* images, and a look Malcolm McLaren would then have been channelling on the Kings Road. I'm quite intrigued by this look. It goes hand-in-hand with how I first accessed 50s music, taking me back to hearing Capital or Radio 1 give the occasional spin to Jerry Byrne's frantic screamer Lights Out or Frankie Ford's Sea Cruise, with its percussive foghorn, or The Showmen's none-more-joyous and optimistic It Will Stand. Rock'n'roll beyond Elvis, Eddie Cochran and Little Richard. The regionalised sounds of New Orleans and New York. Worlds within worlds.

Anyway, *The Golden Years Of Rock'n'Roll* was a proper revelation. It helped me discover doo wop (The Five Satins' In The Still Of The Night), early soul (The Falcons' You're So Fine, Ike & Tina Turner's It's Gonna Work Out Fine), early Spector (The Paris Sisters' I Love How You Love Me), soft rock (The Fleetwoods' Mr Blue), girl groups (The Exciters' original Do Wah Diddy) and whatever the heck Dick and Dee Dee's traumatised wail The Mountain's High was meant to be. All avenues I've been walking down ever since.

The only big names missing were Elvis (unsurprisingly), Little Richard and Gene Vincent, presumably for contractual reasons. But their records were readily available elsewhere, unlike Jay & The Americans' She Cried, a cross between a Dear Jane letter and a death march across the desert, or Lonnie Mack's wild improv take on Chuck Berry's Memphis Tennessee (Lonnie! You forgot the melody! Who cares!). It included both The Rivingtons' Papa Oom Mow Mow AND The Trashmen's Surfin' Bird because, of course – copyrights be damned – the world absolutely needs both of them.

The going rate is around £12. Compared to recent Bowie box sets, it's the steal of the century

The box set was put together by Alan Warner, a name I vaguely knew from other compilations – a bit of quick research shows he wrote the sleevenotes for Gordon Lightfoot's *Early Lightfoot* and John Barry's *Best Of Bond* comps on United Artists in the late 60s, and he later put together the *Sue Records Story* and *Crescent City Soul* box sets for EMI in the 90s. He would have worked alongside the great Andrew Lauder at United Artists, who himself put together the classic Merseybeat and Beat Merchants compilations in the mid-70s. And I know that Warner also compiled *On The Road Again: Rock's New Frontiers* in 1981 (as part of a series called *Rock Of Ages*), which may look like a grab-bag to the discerning *RC* reader but, aged 16, this was my introduction to The Stone Poneys' Different Drum, Sugarloaf's Green Eyed Lady and The Outsiders' Time Won't Let Me. Imagine hearing these for the first time… on one album!

Alan Warner more recently wrote sleevenotes for Acrobat's public domain but perfectly put together *British Hit Parade* series, covering every hit single up to 1962. He also, apparently, wrote the sleevenotes for the all-encompassing Can box set released by Rough Trade in 2013, harking back to his days as label manager at UA when Andrew Lauder merrily assembled a roster that included Can, Neu!, Hawkwind, The Groundhogs and Dr Feelgood. That office must have been fun. I say Alan Warner *apparently* wrote the sleevenotes because I've never seen a copy and the current going rate is around £500, so I'm not likely to see one any time soon.

The current going rate for *The Golden Years Of Rock'n'Roll*, however, is around £12. In these straitened times, and set against the price of, say, recent Bowie box sets, this is the bargain of the century. I read this morning that Warner sadly passed away in January this year, so I'd belatedly like to thank him for introducing teenage me to so many – *so* many! – great records from the late 50s and early 60s. From Ooh Poo Pah Doo to Papa Oom Mow Mow. Just beautiful.

Bob Stanley's* Let's Do It: The Birth Of Pop *is published by Faber.

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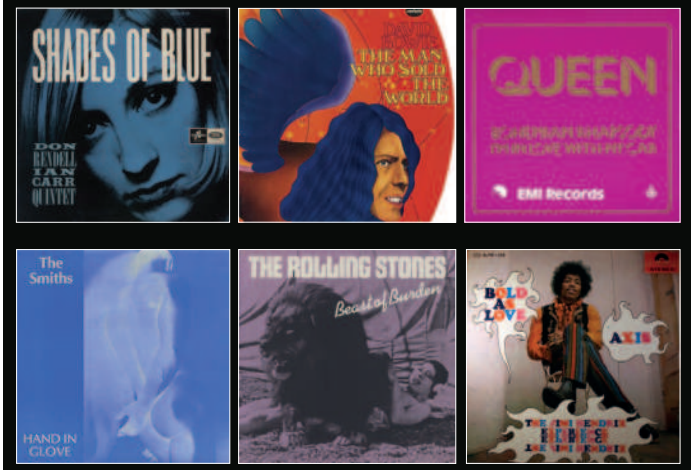

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Ian McCann examines James Brown's role as producer of other artists' albums

James Brown began to produce other musicians in 1959. As a singer who toured with a "revue", he could control his support acts, make his shows an event, and most importantly, handle a promoter's money and distribute it as he saw fit. It also provided a flow of artists he could produce. Few saw much chart action from their releases – most were issued on labels focused on Mr Brown – but that didn't indicate a shortage of talent. Some found fame beyond Brown's gravitational pull, including Tammy Montgomery, who transformed into Tammy Terrell, and the fearsome Yvonne Fair, both at Motown. Others had star status which Brown attempted to restore, such as The Five Royal(e)s. Sometimes the act was Brown's band in disguise (AABB, The Devils). There are too many Brown-produced singles to detail here, but albums? No problem.

The first was Anna King's *Back To Soul* (UK Smash, UK Philips, 1964). The Philadelphian cut singles for minuscule labels before she joined Brown's revue. He spotted the potential of this woman with a fierce voice and paired her with Bobby Byrd for the small US hit, Baby Baby Baby. The album's material is mixed (Tennessee Waltz, anyone?) but Ms King confidently handles it all.

Further female revue members were granted an album. The great Marva Whitney's tough if sometimes shrill tones graced two JB-supervised LPs, *It's My Thing* (King, 1969), and *Live And Lowdown At The Apollo* (King, 1970). While some of the productions seem a shade slapdash, it's hard not to like this stylish (white Afro wig, designer minidress) and approachable-sounding Kansas City singer. Brown branded her Soul Sister #1 to match his butch version of that title. Ms Whitney remains best known for Unwind Yourself, sampled on The 45 King's The 900 Number and many later hip hop hits, but it's not her best track; It's My Thing, an answer to The Isley Brothers' It's Your Thing, is funkier than its inspiration, and Things Got To Get Better is gritty street soul. They're on *It's My Thing.* A jazzier third album, *I Sing Soul,* remains unreleased.

Kay Robinson's *We Need Time* (King, 1970) is a highly arranged gospel album, with Kay's powerful if sometimes unsympathetically produced voice tackling the likes of Lord, I'm Yours and Oh Happy Day. While her style suits the sacred, any aptitude for the secular went untested. Brown urged the present-day Bishop, Dr Kay Robinson, to cut soul records, but she refused, ending her stint with the boss.

No such limitations hampered Lyn Collins, tagged "The Female Preacher", who unleashed two ballsy albums, the acclaimed *Think (About It)* (People, 1972) and the accomplished *Check Me Out If You Don't Know Me By Now* (1975). She needed guts to survive: Brown reputedly gave her a hard time. Her wonderful voice was comfortable riding the roughest funk, yet she was adept with a sultry ballad. Ms Collins scored several soul hits, and deserved real stardom. But there was only room for one supernova in JB's firmament.

Brown produced a country LP for the Mayor of Macon, Georgia

In 1968, Brown decided to revive the fortunes of Hank Ballard, a hitmaker at King when Brown still wore L-plates. He cut several appealingly funky 45s on Ballard, and the excellent *You Can't Keep A Good Man Down* (King, 1968). They gave Ballard more attention than he'd enjoyed in years, but it didn't match his fame in the 50s, when he'd launched the ultimate dance craze, the twist. JB also funked-up King's stalwart organist, Bill Doggett, on the sought-after *Honky Tonk Popcorn* (1969).

Brown cut some impressive albums with long-term sidemen. 'Sweet' Charles Sherrell played keyboards and bass with the JBs and was later Brown's bandleader. Blessed with a beautifully delicate soul voice, *For Sweet People From Sweet Charles* (People, 1974) is a peachy, warm-hearted affair. Brown also oversaw the debut by his right-hand-man and early parole sponsor, Bobby Byrd. *I Need Help, Live On Stage* (King/UK Mojo, 1970) is a funky marvel, and it's not a live LP. Byrd is as energised as the bossman on the likes of I Know You Got Soul and the title track. Had he not hitched his wagon to Brown's, he could have been mega. Byrd's wife, Vicki Anderson, a superb singer in the revue, was never granted an LP. Martha High, a tender-voiced vocalist, spent 15 years in Brown's show before her disco-oriented eponymous album arrived (Salsoul, 1979).

There were oddities. Brown produced a country LP for the deeply controversial Republican Mayor of Brown's 60s hometown, Macon, Georgia, *Here I Am* (Starday, 1970); maybe it was politically expedient to do so. Dee Felice Trio's *In Heat* (Bethlehem, 1969) offered groove-jazz akin to Ramsey Lewis's work before he adopted complex arrangements. A psych effort, *The Grodeck Whipperjenny* (People, 1970), bore Brown's branding but he didn't produce it.

Some of his greatest albums were by his band, the JBs, and they were usually joyous affairs in which Brown participated. Their first official release was *Food For Thought* aka *Pass The Peas* (King/UK Mojo, 1972), a thoroughly satisfying instrumental excursion, introduced by Bobby Byrd and Fred Wesley. It ranges from the fury of The Grunt to the funereal Theme From King Heroin. Sax star Maceo Parker's *Us* (People/UK Polydor, 1974) is spirited and soulful. *Doing It To Death* (People, 1973), is also very handy, as is *Breakin' Bread* (People, 1974), both credited to trombonist Fred Wesley & The JBs. The jewel in their crown is Wesley's *Damn Right I Am Somebody*, (People/UK Polydor 1974). There were later JBs' albums, not entirely without merit, but they'd never top *Damn Right,* the greatest funk album I've heard.

Next month, the third leg of this tripod: James Brown as instrumentalist, and other thoughts.

Ian McCann is giving up food for funk.

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...to write a column for *Record Collector.* Yay

What'd I say?

I'll tell you what I hate, what I really really hate. Those unhilarious dissections of song words, the kind that always begin, "Dear The Jam" and commence a list of wearying, pedantic dismantling of how the wine can't be flat and the curry gone cold and what are too many right wing meetings and so on. It makes me want to pinch the bridge of someone else's nose, never mind my own.

Popular song, as the kids call it, isn't meant to stand up to such rigorous mirth-quenching. The idea that, when Frank Sinatra sang, "Fly me to the Moon," some tosser was seconds away from going, "Actually, Frank, space travel isn't real and even if there is a manned lunar mission I very much doubt AMUSED CHORTLE that NASA would let a SNORFLE SNORFLE a SNURK SNURRK SNORRRK pop singer go up in a OH MY GOD HE'S GOT A MACHINE GUN AAARGH". You get the picture (yes we see).

Lyrics for many years were entirely mysterious (even now, nobody can really spell "Awopbopaloobopawopbamboom") until the Rock Album was invented and Serious Artists started having their lyrics printed (thereby enabling Serious Twats to mock said lyrics). Until then we'd had to rely on sheet music, where the words al-ways had too ma-ny hy-phens in, or sheer guess work. Which is why we ended up with all those FBI reports on how Louie Louie was a secret message to America which would make teenagers want to have sex with communists when they heard it on the radio (and in a way, they were right).

But isn't, I argue, part of the joy of popular music that it's mysterious? Do we really want to live in a world where every line, every word has been deciphered and explained? And I'm not just talking about mondegreens, those comical misheard lyrics like, e.g., "Scuse me while I kiss this guy" and, er, the other one, but the glorious bafflement of a muffled lyric on a jukebox 45. We all know and love, and are no way tired of, Steve Miller's great claim to be the Pompetus of Love on The Joker, and if we are hip, we know where the line comes from, but does it matter? I have no idea what a pompetus is, and even if there is such a thing in real life, I don't ever want to know.

My generation of music fans – the ones who used to find the idea of Old Punks hilarious until they were given a mirror for their 60th birthday – grew up in an era of singles without lyric sheets and just before the invention of the *Smash Hits* songwords transcription. This meant that a great deal of the music we heard was incomprehensible to us. Joey Ramone could turn an entire sentence into one word, rendering, "I don't wanna go down to the basement" as "Abwaaa". Jimmy Pursey was a faux Cockney blurt of sound (the only time he spoke clearly, it was to say, "Dig I chavvy, it's a mudtown slosher" which was of no help to the listener whatsoever).

Joey Ramone could turn an entire sentence into one word

And even Pete Shelley, whose lyrics deserve to be studied as poetry and read out on the radio, could sometimes be hard to understand: Buzzcocks' What Do I Get? is one of the best songs ever written but there is a bit where I always sing, "Alone in here and my hardy dee dar." The same goes with The Members' wonderful Solitary Confinement, whose chorus appears to contain the line, "And you're in a tin" (I did ask a mutual friend to ask the late Nick Tesco what the actual line was, and he told us, but I'm still not convinced). Best of all, and most incomprehensible of all, is David Bowie's rumbling, half-audible monologue during one of the choruses of Ashes To Ashes where, as he sings the refrain, his voice can also be heard intoning something in a low mutter.

I'm sure you have your own favourites. Maybe they're baffling moments of unintended lyrical density, perhaps they're just references to things that are a bit unexpected (Smokey Robinson's erudite namechecks in Tears Of A Clown always get me) or it could be that the singer could do with an elocution lesson, but I can guarantee this: just as a magic trick is never better when you know how it was done, or a whodunnit seems obvious and dull when you find out who the perpetrator is, a song is always better when you don't know what the real words are. Fact.

Because I know I could look these things up, and many others, but I don't want to. It would spoil the mystery (and when I did look up one of my favourites, The Stranglers' Ugly, I slightly regretted it). So I'll continue to wonder at the strangeness of it all, strain to hear what Bowie's saying, and burble along to What Do I Get? It is, after all, part of the mystery of popular song, the glory of rock'n'roll and, if you like, the Pompetus of Love.

David Quantick tweets @quantick.

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auteurtoauthor

Luke Haines writes the shuk out of rock'n'roll

The best song ever… is an amalgam of best bits

I am suffering from post-tour restlessness. That is, I am missing the adrenaline jolt that one gets from playing one and a half hours of improbably loud rock'n'roll onstage with a smokin' hot band. The other tour stuff - falling asleep in a tour bus in bizarre positions, discussing the merits of crisps, Tabasco, and Colman's English mustard, and whether The Strawbs recorded a glam/prog masterpiece (they did: *Hero And Heroine*) – I can take or leave. So, on a long, mardy English bank holiday weekend I decided to cure my malady, by creating the greatest song ever recorded.

Relax. This isn't the usual self-aggrandisement. This song/track won't feature any of my work, words, or strumming. This tune will be constructed entirely of other artists' work. The best "bits", if you like. I will only take the greatest moments from all my favourite records and edit them all together to make a two-and-a-half-minute modernist masterpiece.

By "moments", I don't mean: a chorus, a favourite verse or a guitar solo. I mean, a literal moment. A second in time or even less. All the budding record producer (that's you and me) will require is a bunch of favourite records and a laptop, or if you really want to kick it old skool, a cassette recorder.

Let's begin with grabbing all the best Beatles moments. First, the opening (and unimprovable) chord of A Hard Day's Night, the one that singlehandedly seemed to usher in a new era. As we all know, some of the best Beatle moments were the screams so we will take the screams from Can't Buy Me Love, Bad Boy, and Revolution. We will also take one "Number 9" and a "Riiiiggght" from Revolution 9, and the audio verite "one, two" (no more than that) from the start of *Revolver*. We seem to have exhausted the Fabs catalogue of screams and reduced the Beatles oeuvre down to five seconds. Excellent.

Having created a high-octane condensed intro based on cut-up Beatles bits, we should have some drums. It's never too soon in a song to have a drum solo. That weird drum break from Bowie's Young Americans goes in first, followed by the opening tom rolls of Junior Murvin's Police And Thieves, and then, laterally thinking, we can grab a snare fill from The Clash's Tommy Gun. Feel the satisfaction of culling The Clash's career down to one snare fill. Cutting out the fat and the bad is the name of the game. It doesn't get badder than Gary Glitter. Relax, we can use the excellent drum opening from Glitter's Hello, Hello I'm Back Again!, safe in the knowledge that – by employing the twin drum kit Glitter Band clatter and forward-thinking Mike Leander production – this remains a Paul Gadd-free product. Do you long to listen to The Classical by The Fall, but feel uncomfortable with that problematic opening line? Just grab the earth-shattering double-drum intro fill. Problem solved

By now it may be dawning on you that LPs contain a helluva lot of filler. Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side Of The Moon* can successfully be edited down to the haunting loony laughter of Brain Damage. If you want to get arch-conceptual you could grab a few seconds of The Residents' *Third Reich'N'Roll* (face it, you haven't listened to it all the way through since you were 14) and insert them into your Residents-style masterpiece.

This song will be entirely constructed of 'moments'

Guitars are going to be a bit trickier. According to the "rules", guitar solos are not allowed. Remember the brief: this song will be constructed entirely of "moments". The opening power chord from T.Rex's 20th Century Boy fits the bill. The accidental feedback of George Harrison's guitar at the start of I Feel Fine goes in, as does the first note of Syd Barrett's Lucifer Sam. While on the subject of early Floyd we'll have a second of Rick Wright's sped-up "loopy in the nursery" piano from See Emily Play.

Do we need vocals? Does Freddie Mercury shit in the woods? "Right Noise" from The Fall's Repetition followed by the glam gang chant of "T, R, E, X" from The Groover. "Time is running and passing" straight outta Big Youth's Wolf In Sheep's Clothing is your hook. Can we include comedy records? Sure. Choose your favourite expletive or cough from Derek And Clive's *Come Again*. As John Lennon once sort of said, "Get in, say what you've got to say, and get out again." You have said what you have to say.

All good records end with a quick fade-out, or, as we in the business call it, "a radio fade". If there was an award for the best fade in pop, then Bowie's Be My Wife would doubtless be the winner. Grab a second of that ending to finish your masterpiece.

It will dawn on you, having taken all your favourite moments from all of your favourite records, that you have successfully edited down your lifelong passion to around 30 seconds. Your record collection is now redundant. Destroy it or sell it. Settle back and listen to your pop masterpiece.

Luke Haines tweets @LukeHaines_News. Luke's radio show, Righteous In The Afternoon, is Tuesdays 2-4pm, on Boogaloo Radio.

NEW!

PRE-ORDER NOW

Record Collector Presents… Iron Maiden is a brand-new, one-off magazine celebrating one of the most revered and successful bands in heavy metal. Condensing the career of an outfit who have enjoyed stellar success and been sonic pioneers for over 40 years is a challenge which some of the biggest names in rock journalism have faced head-on. Here, fans and collectors will learn a wealth of new information about the band, as we trace their history from their East End roots, telling the story of all 17 studio albums as well as investigating the live albums and tour films. We profile Iron Maiden's most collectible releases, and investigate some of their choicest memorabilia. Meanwhile, the people closest to the band tell us how they created an empire, including the phenomenon of Maiden's mega-selling beer range. Official photographer John McMurtrie showcases his stunning pictures among some beautiful images that reach back to the band's earliest days. There's much more besides in *Record Collector*'s complete book of souls.

In shops from 30 June

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TALKING HEADS

On the couch with *RC*'s resident shrink, Dr Tim

RICKY ROSS

Deacon Blue frontman on his latest solo set

Tell us about the project.
It's the second part of an indefinite sequence and a companion piece to my memoir, including a few re-interpretations of earlier Deacon Blue songs.
If you could re-visit any of your albums, what'd you change?
I wish I'd been braver with *When The World Knows Your Name*. [Producer] Paul Russell suggested taking off the title track, and it would've been better with one less song, as would *This Is The Life*.
Is there anything still unissued?
Loads, but it's fairly awful!
With whom would you like to make a split 7"?
The Beatles.
When did you first hear one of your songs on vinyl?
A Tom Morton album in the early 80s.
What was your favourite record shop when you started out?
Groucho's, The Perth Road, Dundee, changed my life.
What was your first record?
Alan Price Set, Don't Stop The Carnival.
What's the last album that you bought?
Joy Crookes *Skin*.
What record made you want to go pro?
Thunderclap Newman *Hollywood Dream*.
Who's taken music forward in the last decade?
Joy Oladokun, Adia Victoria, Tre Burt, Amythyst Kiah, Allison Russell.
Have you ever collected anyone?
Randy Newman.
Which of your songs is the most personally meaningful?
Dignity.
Of all the people that you've worked with, who taught you the most?
We toured with Simple Minds in 2008 and Jim Kerr's a master at performance.
Which album, on first listen, is the most startling that you ever heard?
Frank Ocean *Channel Orange*.
What's your favourite songwriter's best lyric?
Ron Sexsmith, God Loves Everyone.

Ricky Ross* Short Stories Vol 2 *CD, LP, Cooking Vinyl, and* Walking Back Home *book, are out 19 August.

DAVE EDWARDS

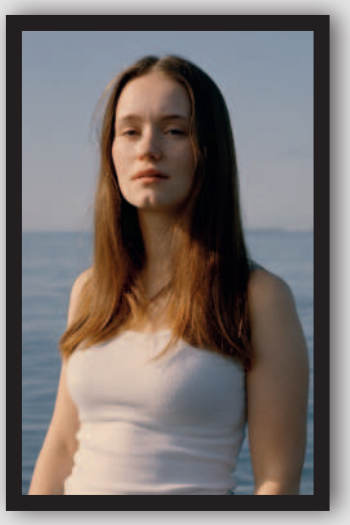
Ramrod guitarist on his catalogue collection

Tell us about the album.
It's my early unreleased songs, with Ted McKenna, Chris Glen [Sensational Alex Harvey Band], Lou Martin, Rod De'Ath, Gerry McAvoy [Rory Gallagher], Clive Brooks [The Groundhogs], Mick Geggus, Vinnie Riordan [Cockney Rejects].
Is there anything still unissued?
Some, which we're going to make an album with.
With whom would you like to make a split 7"?
It Bites.
Who'd you like to produce?
The Walker Brothers.
Where were you when you first heard one of your songs on vinyl?
At home, in the 70s. Gunrunner.
What was your favourite record shop when you started out?
Selman's Records, Barking Road, London.
What was your first record?
The Beatles, Day Tripper.
What's the last album that you bought?
Glen Campbell's last record.
What record made you want to go pro?
The Shadows, Apache.
Was anyone in your family a musician?
My dad sang, and played piano and drums.
Have you ever collected anyone?
Scott Walker – 200 records.
Who'd you like to cover one of your songs?
Steve Perry, Forever.
Of all the people that you've worked with, who taught you the most?
Rory Gallagher.
What backstage incident makes you laugh most?
Supporting Status Quo in Paris, in 1977, with Remus Down Boulevard, I fell into the orchestra pit. The bouncers wouldn't let me back onstage!
What fact about you may surprise fans?
I build guitars and get a Christmas card from Brian May every year!
Which album, on first listen, is the most startling that you ever heard?
Capability Brown *From Scratch*.
Dying peacefully on your deathbed, what'd you like to hear?
The Beatles, Help!

Dave Edwards* Many Rivers *is on Cadiz, 24 June.

SIGRID

Norse singer on her latest outing



Which movie could your new set soundtrack?
It's positive songs about frustration, and more organic instrumentation, so, an indie coming-of-age film like *Lady Bird* or *Book Smart*.
Have you done anything that fans may not know about?
I had a song in the *Justice League* film and it was fucking epic to go to the cinema and watch it with my opening cover song. Big moment.
Is there anything still unissued?
Yes. My parents filmed a lot.
Where did you first hear one of your songs on vinyl?
It was the *Don't Kill My Vibe* EP, at my brother's flat in Bergen. Very special moment with the vinyl crackle. Holding vinyl in your hands is so sick, and I just signed copies of my second album – 5,700 of them!
What's the first record that you bought?
Coldplay *Milo Xyloto*. My favourite band ever.
What's the last album that you bought?
Siv Jakobsen *Live In Oslo*, at a gig.
What was your favourite record shop when you started out?
Jukebox in Alesund, where my dad still pre-orders all his Neil Young records. I was really attracted by the sleeves, like in Notting Hill, recently – inspiration for my own.
Was anyone in your family a musician?
My grandmother taught me piano, my sister and brother have amazing voices, and my dad plays guitar.
Of all the people that you've worked with, who taught you the most?
Emily Warren and Caroline Alin taught me so much about re-phrasing to get your point across, and developing my voice.
What'd you ask your music hero?
Chris Martin and the band. How do you do it all, and still stay friends?
Who'd you like to cover one of your songs?
High Note, The War On Drugs' Adam Granduciel. They're fucking amazing live [*sings*].
Who'd you like to produce?
Flight.
If you had a record-listening party, what'd you play, and who'd you invite?
Neil Young *Harvest*, and my dad and brother. We'd nerd out.
Which album, on first listen, is the most startling that you ever heard?
Highasakite *Silent Treatment*. Played it every day for two weeks. Captivated.
What record made you want to go pro?
Adele *21*. The inspiration to belt it from your heart.
What backstage incident makes you laugh most?
I don't dress up a lot, so I'm not very recognisable when I walk around festivals. A couple of times, when

> ***"ADELE WAS THE INSPIRATION TO BELT IT FROM THE HEART"***

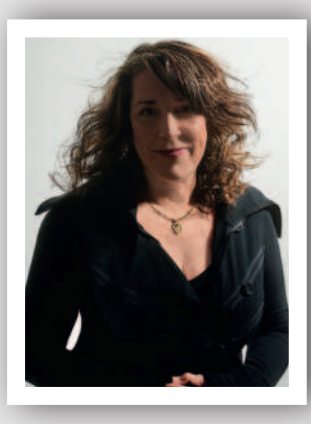
I went to go onstage, they wouldn't let me go on, 'cos they didn't know who I was. "Where's your pass?" I had to run to get it, to get onto my own show [*laughs*].
If one of your homes had a blue plaque, which should it be?
18, Park Road, Bergen, where six of us lived at my brother's and had an amazing time. Massive all-night DJ parties for 200! Epic times.
If you drove an ice cream van, what'd it play?
The War On Drugs, Under The Pressure [*sings*].
What unfulfilled ambitions do you have?
To properly shred on guitar. Work in progress. And I'm living my dream in music, but I really want to go to uni at some point. Maybe history or politics.

Sigrid* How To Let Go *LP, orange, purple, clear LPs, CD are on Island.

Credit: (Ricky Ross) Simon Murphy ; (Sigrid) Lasse Floede

BETH NIELSEN CHAPMAN

Country chanteuse on her latest offering



What film could your new set soundtrack?
Thelma And Louise.
Have you done anything that fans may not know about?
At some point I'll do a box set of side-projects and bits from everywhere.
Who'd you like to produce?
Annie Lennox.
What was your first record?
The Beatles' Penny Lane.
What's the last album that you bought?
Rodney Crowell *Triage*.
What record made you want to go pro?
Carole King *Tapestry*.
Was anyone in your family a musician?
My uncle Richard, my mum's brother, sang with Rich Kelly & Friends, and still sings. Wilco love him!
Who'd you like to cover one of your songs?
Sting, Sand & Water.
Which of your songs is the most personally meaningful?
With Time comes from a very deep place of vulnerability around the passing of time.
Of all the people that you've worked with, who taught you the most?
Recently, producer Ray Kennedy. I came into a higher level of letting go and relaxing into the centre of the band.
Do you plan a book?
I'm just starting a memoir.
What's your favourite songwriter's best lyric?
Leonard Cohen, Bernadette.
Which of your lyrics would you like to see on a T-shirt?
Seven Shades Of Blue's chorus.
What unfulfilled ambitions do you have?
I'd love to study visual art, painting and sculpture, and go to chef school.
If you drove an ice cream van, what'd it play?
Somewhere Over The Rainbow.
Dying peacefully on your deathbed, what'd you like to hear?
The next song that I'm writing. Maybe they'll let me finish it from heaven!

Beth Nielsen Chapman* Crazy Town *CD, LP are on Cooking Vinyl, 23 September.

FABRIZIO GROSSI

Bassist on **Supersonic Blues Machine**'s star-studded new platter

What film could your new set soundtrack?
RocknRolla.
Is there anything still unissued?
A lot. At some point, I'll have to address that.
With whom would you like to make a split 7"?
Lenny Kravitz or U2.
What was your favourite record shop when you started out?
Mariposa, Milan, Italy.
What was your first record?
Bob Marley & The Wailers, *Babylon By Bus*.
What's the last album that you bought?
Fantastic Negrito *White Jesus, Black Problems*.
What record made you want to go pro?
Led Zeppelin *The Song Remains The Same*.
What's the oddest place that's inspired a song?
A desert shack between Palmdale and Las Vegas – The Stranger.
Who's taken music forward in the last decade?
Esperanza Spalding, The Black Keys, Vintage Trouble, Fantastic Negrito.
Which of your songs are the most personally meaningful?
Let It Be and Right Down Below.
What records that you own may surprise fans?
Depeche Mode, Yazoo, Psychedelic Furs, Bauhaus, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Michael Jackson.
If you had a record-listening party, what'd you play, and who'd you invite?
Steve Wonder *Songs In The Key Of Life*. Glenn Hughes, Gary Clark Jr, Steve Lukather, Chad Smith, Stephen Perkins, Marcus King, Joe Louis Walker, Derek Day, Supersonic Blues Machine, Soul Garage Experience.
Do you plan a book?
Yes.
What unfulfilled ambitions do you have?
To write, direct and score my own feature film.
Dying peacefully on your deathbed, what'd you like to hear?
Bob Marley, Get Up, Stand Up, or Procol Harum, A Whiter Shade Of Pale.

Supersonic Blues Machine *Voodoo Nation* is on Provogue, 24 June.

JON NATCHEZ

The War On Drugs' multi-instrumentalist on his latest soundtrack

Tell us about your latest project.
I'm working on two film scores, one for an independent feature involving contralto clarinet, bass recorder, moseño and other strange, low winds, and the other is for a documentary.
Have you done anything that fans may not know about?
A million sideman things – horns, strange instruments. Friends often call me for fun, random recordings. My favourite uncredited appearance was in Netflix's *Wet Hot American Summer: First Day Of Camp*, where a pre-teen girl goes into a bathroom stall, having experienced her first period, then emerges 10 seconds later as a woman in her 30s. Craig Wedren needed an energetic, smooth-jazz sax solo to be the sound of womanhood arriving.
With whom would you like to make a split 7"?
Felbm.
What was your favourite record shop when you started out?
Cheapo, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where I found a strange (maybe bootlegged) breakbeat compilation, *Breakdown*. Skullsnaps blew my young mind. Every track is killer soul/funk.
What was your first record?
Ozzy Osbourne *Bark At The Moon*.
What's the last album that you bought?
Eiko Ishibashi *Drive My Car OST*.
Who's taken music forward in the last decade?
Floating Points. Everything that he makes sounds fresh and distinctive, and includes some sound or idea that I've never heard before. I'd be chuffed to play on something of his.
Of all the people that you've worked with, who taught you the most?
Working with The War On Drugs has taught me about shaping timbres, and meticulously working on recording techniques and details, plus the general creative practice of how to listen to and refine work over time.
What stage incident makes you cringe most?
At a show with Alan Cumming and Liza Minnelli, doing songs from *Cabaret* at New York Town Hall, I was playing a lot of instruments that I don't normally play – banjo, trumpet, accordion. During a break between songs, Liza was monologuing, and I took the opportunity to silently practice a tricky accordion part. As my right hand was running the keyboard part, my left hand – which had been keeping the bellows closed, preventing the accordion from making noise – slipped. The loudest, most awful squeak erupted, as Liza was building to her punchline. She looked over, livid, and thought it was the saxophonist behind me!
Which album, on first-listen, is the most startling that you ever heard?
Fred Lane *From The One That Cut You*. Marvellously strange – album and Alabamian. I was utterly confused, amazed and entertained.

"MY LEFT HAND SLIPPED AND LIZA MINELLI WAS LIVID!"

For the the same disorientation, check out first song, Fun In The Fundus, an apocalyptic fanfare of blown-out trombones, then Dadaist big band romp, and a truly unhinged scat solo.
What's your favourite songwriter's best lyric?
Willie Nelson: "They'll lead me safely through the night/And I'll follow as though blind/My future tightly clutched within/Those healing hands of time."
What unfulfilled ambitions do you have?
To write a great piece of narrative non-fiction *a la* John McPhee or Joseph Mitchell, and learn to *really* play drums.
If you drove an ice cream van, what'd it play?
Booker T & The MGs' Hip Hug-Her.
Dying peacefully on your deathbed, what'd you like to hear?
Billy Joel, Just The Way You Are.

Jon Natchez* Luzzu *LP is on Geist Im Kino.

Credit: (Fabrizio Grossi) Alex Solca ; (Jon Natchez) Ray Lynch

33⅓ minutes with... Ann Wilson

Interview: Mark McStea

***Fierce Bliss*, Ann Wilson's third solo album, will bring a sense of joy and familiarity to fans of Heart. With a similar stylistic range and the usual high quality of songwriting, it sits comfortably alongside the best of Heart's back catalogue. Wilson is in fine voice, and unfazed by recent developments: her sister, Nancy, has recently announced plans to tour as Nancy Wilson's Heart, stemming from disagreements with Ann about her choice of band members for Heart.**

Does this signify a split in the band?
I think it's an interim thing, and I'm really glad that she's got the confidence to go out and do it. I think for her to be calling it Heart is really going to confuse the fans. The important thing is that she gets to go out and push back her boundaries as a musician. What she brings back to Heart from that experience will be valuable, just the same as it is with me working on my own for this record.

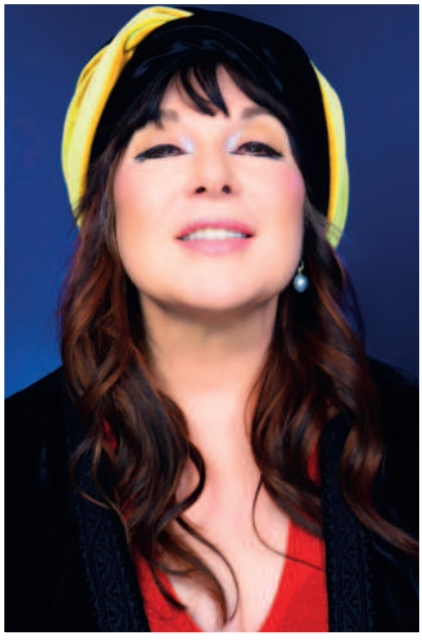
The sound of Heart is primarily the sound of your voice. Do you think there is something wrong with Nancy having somebody else sing?
Yes, it's hard when the singer changes. Like, for instance, with Queen, when it wasn't Freddie Mercury. They're still a great band, but you just don't get the same hit off another singer's voice singing those songs. It's like picturing the Stones without Mick or Led Zeppelin without Robert Plant.

Is Heart only really Heart when it's you and Nancy?
That's a question a fan would have to answer. If it's a song like Crazy For You, that's not going to sound like Heart without Nancy's acoustic guitar on there, and I guess it's the same if someone else is singing. I just hope that, as time goes on, in the next year or so, we can see eye-to-eye on who's going to be in the band and go back out on tour together. I'm very optimistic that we can work it out.

You must be very pleased with *Fierce Bliss*.
Yes, indeed. I think it shows a level up for me, both as a songwriter and with my new band.

What made you use Roger Dean for the cover artwork?
The album is coming out on vinyl, and I wanted to do a real vinyl package. I was a huge fan of the work that he did for Yes years ago; I thought what he brought to this was a real sense of 'now'. It's like when we were young, and we'd hold the record in our hands, read the lyrics, you know? I wanted it to be like that. That got lost for many years with CDs.

What makes a song an Ann Wilson song as opposed to a Heart song?
There is no difference, really. I guess since my sister isn't on it, that's the only difference. Other than that, it's exactly the same process as the songs that I'd write and record for Heart.



"It was the most successful period of the band but it was a Faustian trade-off"

There are some interesting covers. Why Robin Trower's Bridge Of Sighs?
I always loved it. It's one of the best blues songs ever written. It's about the abyss; a deep, existential blues song.

You bring a lot of Zep to your cover of Missionary Man.
Yeah, that's a great song and it speaks to what's going on in America right now with all the evangelists and the right-wing religious movements. I think it's very timely.

As a band fronted by two women, you've had well-documented problems with sexism within the industry. Do things seem better nowadays?
I think things have gone a good distance but there are still pitfalls, for anyone, particularly for women, when it comes to imaging. I see all of these young women who are hyper-sexualising themselves and calling it feminism. I'm thinking, 'Are you sure?' But anyway, the music industry is probably never going to change at its root when it comes to objectifying women. I hope I'm wrong, though.

You had to make compromises when you signed to Capitol in the 80s, in terms of song choice and production. Did it seem worth it?
We did have a tough time with the label, and also with Ron Nevison, who produced our big albums for Capitol. He worked us really hard, and it wasn't always fun. You know, I think of what we went through as the bargain that we struck up, because it got us our first No 1 record and really transformed the level of success that we were experiencing. It was the most commercially successful period for the band, but it was definitely a Faustian trade-off. Nancy was told that acoustic guitars were totally unhip and on the way out, so she wasn't happy about that. It was a time that knocked us both off balance, as we weren't being true to ourselves, but it didn't last that long.

Although the quality of the albums that you made after your success in the early 80s didn't drop off, sales did decline. Was that frustrating?
I definitely think those albums didn't receive the credit and appreciation that they deserved, but I understand it as well, because the music industry is always changing. Particularly from the 80s to the 90s, I think there was a sea-change. I took that drop-off as an opportunity to live life and raise my kids, so I did that for 10 years.

I read last year that there were plans to make a movie of your life story. Is that still in the pipeline?
Yes, it is. It's been written and directed by Carrie Brownstein, who was in Sleater-Kinney. She's from Seattle like me. I just spoke to her very recently and she's finishing up the last tweaks on the script. It will be very interesting to see how it turns out. It will be for Amazon; I don't know yet who will play me, a few names have been mentioned but I don't think the right person has been found yet.

You're a powerhouse vocalist. Do you have to adapt your style and preparation after all these years?
Oh, yes. The human voice naturally gets lower as you get older, so I've figured out ways to retain my high range and to also to utilise a lower range as well, which I really like.

What keeps everything fresh for you?
The music, new ideas and people to work with. In my line of work, I'm always travelling, there's new places to see and new energies to absorb. The minute you stop and sit at home, it would get real old real fast.

Next year is the 50th anniversary for Heart. Have you got anything planned to celebrate it?
We've got a lot of special plans that are in development, we're really going to celebrate. Fifty years of anything is a pretty great achievement.

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"WE FOLLOWED TOO MANY RULES"

After an absence of seven years, **Def Leppard** return with a new album and a new way of thinking. But fans of multi-million monster sets like *Hysteria*, or radio-friendly hits such as Pour Some Sugar On Me, can rest assured the band still rock as hard as ever. Forty-five years since their formation in 1977 (see what we did there?), frontman **Joe Elliott** is relishing augmenting the familiar sounds of old with ventures into fresh territory and finding new methods to make their jobs more interesting. "I don't think we will ever, ever go back to making an album in the traditional way," he tells **Terry Staunton**.

In November 1978, five teenage pretenders to rock's throne walked into a Hull fish-and-chip shop with £1.50 in their pockets, in the mood to celebrate before heading home to Sheffield. It didn't buy them a feast, but it was all they had left from the 150 quid singer Joe Elliott borrowed from his dad to pay for the nearby studio where they'd just recorded the three songs that would comprise the debut EP by their band, Def Leppard.

From such humble beginnings, a mighty – and enduring – juggernaut was born. Elliott has been at the tiller of Def Leppard for close to 45 years now, selling in excess of 100 million albums worldwide. Although a key band in the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal in the early 80s, they were never comfortable with their place in the movement, and the Sheffield-spawned outfit ultimately made a bigger impact in the US, where albums such as *Pyromania*, *Hysteria* and *Adrenalize* made them stars on the scale of their own early heroes Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath.

Unlike the hard rock behemoths they idolised, however, Leppard successfully tapped into broader mainstream markets when, with a little help from heavy rotation on MTV, singles like Pour Some Sugar On Me, Love Bites and Let's Get Rocked jostled for position at the top of the charts with pop divas and boy bands. Diehard rockers and purists stuck with them, untroubled by such nakedly commercial pursuits, the band only faltering (slightly) on the 1996 tweak-of-the-template album, *Slang*, reflecting on – rather than reacting to – the movers and shakers of grunge.

They've endured setbacks that might have done for lesser bands, notably drummer Rick Allen losing an arm in a car accident in 1985, and the death six years later of founding guitarist Steve Clark from alcohol poisoning, but as Ellliott tells *RC* in this exclusive interview, those events spurred them on to seek greater goals.

Diamond Star Halos, their 12th studio album, bears many of the hallmarks of classic Def Leppard, while suggesting a band keen to widen the scope of their craft. The methods with which they've approached its making are previously untested, some forced upon them by the restrictions of lockdown, others borne of a reinvigorated creative curiosity.

The record's title alludes to a T.Rex lyric, and glam rock is a touchstone throughout. But there are further, more surprising elements at work, such as an unlikely (on paper, at least) hookup with a country music superstar.

Elliott speaks to *RC* from his Dublin home, in a room he nominally calls an office but admits is more a "messy" library for the thousands upon thousands of discs and old VHS tapes he's amassed over the years, reflecting his varied musical tastes ("I'm not a hoarder, I'm a *collector*," he stresses). Given the glam motifs of Leppard's new album, it seems a good place to start, asking him about the contents of those shelves.

Let's talk memories of glam from your youth. Who did you see? What records were you obsessed with?

Like most people my age the relationship with glam was cemented via the gogglebox, because when you're about 12 you're not going to loads of gigs, unless you've got weird parents. We all have our *Sliding Doors* moments, and for me one was the week we got a colour telly. When you finally start seeing Slade and Sweet and Bowie and T.Rex in all their full-on finery it blows your mind; you'd watch *Top Of The Pops*, sit through the dross of Tony Orlando & Dawn or whatever, but then you'd get Noddy Holder in his mirrored top hat and stupid platforms, or Marc Bolan with glitter on his cheeks. Kids of my age were, and are, like sponges. They soak up all this magic and it never leaves them.

I didn't have weird parents, but they did let me go to see T.Rex at Sheffield City Hall on the *Electric Warrior* tour, because it was the first album I owned and I played it to death at home. I still remember the exact date: 23 October 1971, my first ever gig. Get It On had been No 1, they were just about to release Jeepster, and it was a life-changing night for me. I can still picture it, going up the steps, handing my ticket over to a bloke dressed as a penguin for some reason, pushing open the doors into the hall and being in the midst of all these mad people, but they were immediately *my* people. I walked into a world I never wanted to leave. I've still got that copy of *Electric Warrior*, as well as the first album I bought with my own money, Rod Stewart's *Every Picture Tells A Story*. They're like old family photos to me. I'd never dream of parting with them.

Is there a particular reason for singling out the Bolan lyric from Get It On for the title of Def Leppard's new album?

It's actually a phrase we've used among

Photo: Anton Corbijn

Joe Elliott in 2022: "We strive to be the best of ourselves, and better than our past selves"

"We didn't want to be part of any movement" (l-r): a very young Def Leppard after playing Crookes Working Men's Club in their native Sheffield on 5 June 1979, a few months after releasing their eponymous debut EP; onstage at Los Angeles Forum, 1983; backstage on the *High'N'Dry* tour, 1982

ourselves for years, a kind of shorthand. We call it Lepspeak! Whenever we've been discussing a specific type of lyric one of us usually ends up saying, "It's very 'hubcap diamond star halo'," which basically means it's a phonetic lyric that sounds better than it reads.

So, it's the nonsense that sounds like genius, essentially.
Exactly – and Bolan built an entire career on it! Jeepster wasn't a word before he came along, but it's phonetically friendly, part of its own international language. You might have lyrics that sound Dylanesque, like eloquent poetry, then at the other end of the spectrum you've got Little Richard and "Awopbopaloobopalopbamboom", and that's the end where "diamond star halo" sits. We were flapping around trying to think of a title for the album, picking out the odd lyric that looked kind of cool, but none of them really floated our boat until Phil [Collen, guitarist] said, "Fuck it, why don't we just call *it* *Diamond Star Halo*?" Suddenly, there was a collective cry of "Yes!" from all of us, although we thought it'd look better pluralised. It gives it a kind of ambiguity: does it refer to the songs, or does it refer to us?

Continuing the Bolan theme, I think I detect a smidgen of Children Of The Revolution in the opening riff to Open Your Eyes on the new album, or is my imagination making connections that aren't there?
That's interesting, I hadn't thought about that, but yeah, tempo-wise, I can understand where you're coming from. The distorted bass takes it away from glam, though, and it was written specifically as an album track; it's not one we've earmarked for single release. But it's turned out to be a very 70s album, in several but not all of the songs, and that's carried on into the artwork. We were going back to what got us interested in music in the first place.

The harmonies on tracks like Take What You Want and From Here To Eternity seem less glam and closer to the power pop side of, say, Todd Rundgren or The Raspberries. Would you agree with that?
I would say it's more like Queen – but then again, Todd Rundgren in about '77, when he did *Ra* with Utopia, sounded a lot like Queen anyway. So yeah, there's definitely a Todd vibe to From Here To Eternity. On this record and the last one [2015's eponymous *Def Leppard*] we've been more influenced by other people's works than our own. We've been guilty in the past of overly referencing ourselves, of being in the studio and asking each other, "Does this sound too much like *Hysteria*? Is it *not enough* like *Hysteria*?" It all changed on the last album when we realised the bass lick on Man Enough sounded a bit like Another One Bites The Dust. There was a time when we'd probably have ditched it, but we just thought, "Fuck it – we *like* Queen!" We went with it, and it's opened up new avenues for us ever since. Two of my songs on the new record were written on a piano, which years ago might have been ditched because it wasn't a very Def Leppard thing to do, but now we just think it's okay to do that, to do whatever the hell feels right. What's the point of setting ourselves rules?

How strict were the rules you'd set yourself in the past?
I think we've probably made the mistake of following too many rules, whether they've been things we've applied to ourselves, or things we've allowed producers to apply to us.

"WE WERE GOING BACK TO WHAT INTERESTED US IN MUSIC IN THE FIRST PLACE"

Starting a song on a piano is an idea that would have been shot down in flames a couple of albums back, but because we were listening to each other's ideas in isolation during Covid, I think it made all of us open to new ways of working. If we'd been in the same room anything unusual would have been shot down, but what we did was communicate exclusively by phone or email – we didn't even Zoom! It made all of us free, we didn't see each other at all for two and a half years, and it was the most fantastic way to make a record. Honestly, I don't think we will ever, *ever* go back to making an album in the traditional way. It removed all the boundaries as to what type of songs we could do; it paved the way to bring in Mike [Garson, pianist and long-serving Bowie collaborator] and Alison [Krauss, country/bluegrass queen].

About those high-profile guests: Presumably, Mike Garson was an obvious choice to flesh out the songs you'd written on piano.
I'm not a great pianist; I'm a bit like Lennon on Imagine, it's pretty basic. The general consensus was we should have a *real* pianist doing it, ie, someone who can give it that extra push. Think back to *Hunky Dory*: Bowie wrote Life On Mars?, but he was sensible enough to get Rick Wakeman in to do the piano. I'd done tribute shows with Mike after David passed away, things where Simon Le Bon and Sting turned up to sing, and it was a really good vibe. I'll tell you what was a real headfuck was my Bowie tribute song, Goodbye Mr Jones, that I'd written for Down 'n' Outz [Elliott's extra-curricular glam project, see sidebar] performed by Mike and other alumni from Bowie's band! So, I sent him a couple of MP3s of the piano songs, and they came back with batshit crazy Garsonisms that reminded me of *Aladdin Sane*.

Alison Krauss may surprise many of your fans.
Well, if you're an *incredibly* attentive Def

Photos: Ross Halfin

Plane sailing – Def Leppard prepare for take-off in Miami on the 1996-97 *Slang* tour (l-r): Rick Savage, Joe Elliott, Phil Collen, Vivian Campbell, Rick Allen; and (right) taking in the acclaim onstage on the same tour

Leppard fan, you'll know she interviewed me for *Q* magazine years ago. She's loved us for ages.

And here's the world thinking Alison's rock god of choice was Robert Plant.
He made the introduction! I was watching a football match with him, where his Wolverhampton Wanderers were playing my Sheffield United, and he said to me, "Annoyingly, your lot are Alison's favourite band." A lot of people never twig that our harmonies, especially when we were working with [producer Robert] Mutt Lange, are based on country music. We've had word back from people like Keith Urban and Taylor Swift that they were really impressed with our harmonies, and when she interviewed me, Alison was picking my brains about how we did them. I shit you not! She comes to see us when she can, we just hang out, and I had a really great night with her and Taylor at the Country Music Awards in Nashville a few years ago.

Let's go back to the start of your career in the late 70s. Despite being weaned on glam there wasn't a huge element of it in the early days of Leppard, just three or four years after you were captivated by Bolan and Bowie.
Not really, no, because what we were doing then was driven by what our first guitarist Pete [Willis] was into, stuff like Robin Trower and Pat Travers. But I think we had the Sweet, Slade, T.Rex thing on the back burner, and when Steve [Clark] came in he brought a kind of mix of the serious rock and the glam rock, like Zal Cleminson in the Sensational Alex Harvey Band. Again, we were all sponges!

Didn't your early live sets include a cover of Pretty Vacant?
Yes! We were big fans of punk, from an attitude point, we liked the kick up the backside it gave everyone. I remember going to gigs in Sheffield and seeing loads of bands doing faux bluesy rock that bored you shitless, and then the next week you'd see The Clash doing Janie Jones, and I'd think, *this* is it! Pretty Vacant was really fun to play, and it didn't belong in any genre. It was just universally great and loads of metal guitarists today consider Steve Jones a hero.

The debut Leppard EP was released on your own Bludgeon Riffola label. One dictionary of colloquialisms defines riffola as "an abundance of dominant riffs," but where did the name come from?
It was a line from the first review we ever had. We played the Limit club in Sheffield, a new band night where you didn't have to audition; you just asked if you could play and they'd give you a spot. We actually opened for The Human League, believe it or not, on a bill with another band called Charles Hawtrey & The Deaf-Aids [*presumably named after a John Lennon remark at the beginning of The Beatles' Two Of Us*], and they spelled our name wrong on the flyer – everything about the night was wrong! But we were reviewed in *Record Mirror*, by a guy who absolutely destroyed us. He said, "Def Leppard came on, all macho crotches and bludgeon riffola," but to give him his due he did point out we were the only band to get an encore. We weren't offended, but that phrase stuck with us, not in our craw. We thought it was funny, and we always wanted to have our own label, in inverted commas, because it looked like you meant business. Bludgeon riffola was probably the first example of Lepspeak, and years later when we renegotiated our deal with Universal after *Hystera* we brought it back as our imprint. It became our version of Led Zeppelin's Swansong.

Did it surprise you when John Peel got behind the EP, considering the usual stuff he played on his show?
A bit, yeah, but Peel was never a snob about anything. He was doing a gig at Sheffield University, and I jumped up on stage to give him a copy – I think he thought I was gonna kill him! But I'd put my phone number on it, and the following Monday he called me at home. My mum shouted upstairs, "There's a bloke called John Peel on the phone for you!" He rang to tell me he was gonna play a track later that night, and we tuned in to hear him say something like, "I'm quite digging this." Then he played a track every night for the rest of the week, and we started getting a lot of heat from all the big record companies. No one thinks of Def Leppard as a Peel-type band, but we owe him a massive debt.

That first EP and subsequent debut album, 1980's *On Through The Night*, positioned you at the forefront of the so-called New Wave Of British Heavy Metal, but you've never been entirely comfortable with that tag, have you?
Any kind of movement, for want of a better word, tends to be reductive, I think. We were inspired by loads of different people: Queen, Zeppelin, Sabbath, Wishbone Ash, but we also thought Steve Jones of the Pistols was a fucking brilliant guitarist. We didn't want to pin ourselves to anything specific. I get it, I see why it's easier to sell something if you put it in a cosy hole, but we didn't want to be part of *any* movement. When a movement dies the whole thing's gone, and even the really good bands in that movement suffer from their association with it, they become part of the last big thing no one's interested in anymore. The Clash survived punk because they evolved and

High 'n' (not particularly) dry: "Savage, Allen, Elliott, Campbell and Collen take their bows on the 2008 Sparkle Lounge tour in July 2008; (right) Elliott bathes in the spotlight on the same tour

became something else, the Pistols' legacy is in tact because they imploded just at the right time after making one amazing album, but who else survived from punk? We didn't want to be seen as casualties or has-beens when the media moved on a couple of years later, and we never thought we fitted in with the NWOBHM thing on a musical level. We wanted to be Def Leppard, we wanted to see who we could become without pigeonholes of someone else's making. That's why we wanted to distance ourselves from it as soon as we could. We were like, "Please! Don't do this to us because you don't know who we are. We're still figuring that out ourselves." I mean, does anybody today think of The Beatles as being part of Merseybeat? No, they don't! I think we probably lost some fans by taking a stand against that pigeonholing.

Around the same period the music press turned on you for spending a lot of time in America, and supposedly ignoring your British fans.
It put people's noses out of joint a bit, and most of it was down to that one song Hello America, all about wish fulfillment and coveting a better, more glamorous life, a kind of, "Get me away from this fucking factory" vibe. We didn't think there was anything wrong with that – neither did The Beatles, the Stones, Zeppelin, The Who, they all wanted to be big in America. We aspired to the same things as our heroes, and I still don't understand why that was seen as taboo. We never asked to be part of the new British metal wave or whatever you call it, we were never that parochial in our thinking.

Speaking of America, did you curse Michael Jackson when he put out *Thriller*? Were it not for that album, 1983's *Pyromania* might have been No 1 in America for months.
Haha! Yeah, we were stuck at No 2 for 16 weeks, or something like that. It was only about six months after it came out, when we saw we were *still* at No 2, that we started thinking, "Jesus Christ! Is this guy at No 1 *ever* gonna stop selling records?!" Thinking about it now, though, to be stuck behind what's probably the biggest record of all time… well, you could do a lot worse. We still sold six million, so we weren't complaining. The most annoying thing was the week *Thriller* finally dropped down the charts the bloody *Flashdance* soundtrack leapfrogged us to No 1!

That's ironic. A band from steel city Sheffield denied the top spot they've been waiting for by an album from a film about a dancer who works in a steel mill.
Go figure! Someone was seriously taking the piss, weren't they?!

The six million you sold on *Pyromania* was dwarfed by the 20 million-plus for the next album, *Hysteria* (1987), but it wasn't an easy record to make. You once described the eight weeks spent recording with Jim Steinman, subsequently abandoned, as an "absolute disaster". Care to elaborate?
He just didn't get us, and he wasn't prepared to bend to our way of thinking. OK, we'd sold six million on our last record, but he'd sold God knows how many more with *Bat Out Of Hell*, and we didn't want to make an album that sounded like a Broadway musical. We wanted to push our own boundaries, we wanted to challenge ourselves the way Kate Bush or Peter Gabriel were; we wanted to develop and progress like The Beatles did when they stopped touring, but it seemed like Steinman just wanted us to do a variation of *Bat Out Of Hell*. I think he was actually writing songs for the sequel when he clocked off each night, then he'd come into the studio the next day, three hours late and tired as fuck, and complain the carpet was the wrong colour. We stuck with him way too long; some of us wanted him gone after a fortnight.

"WE WERE STUCK AT NO 2 FOR 16 WEEKS – BEHIND *THRILLER*"

***Pyromania* producer Mutt Lange returned to finish the album, but there are persistent, apocryphal tales about his bizarre working methods as well. Is it true he had you record each guitar string individually?**
Hahahaha! Yeah, that one's been doing the rounds for years, but it's rubbish. It probably stems from something he did on *Pyromania*, which was isolate *two* strings on *one* song for about *12* seconds! It was a tiny little thing which, because it was in a minor key, sounded a bit crap and weedy, so he beefed it up a bit. That's all. Can we put this one to bed now?

In Phil Collen's book he refers to "the ragged flannel world of grunge" prompting a rethink in your game plan. After the massive sales of *Hysteria* and 1992's *Adrenalize*, was *Slang* a conscious reaction to grunge, acknowledging that the goalposts had shifted?
Well, it wasn't like we'd heard *Nevermind* or *Ten* by Pearl Jam and panicked. What we

Photos: Anton Corbijn; Maryanne Bilham photography

Going Def for a living – the four lesser-spotted Leppards line up in 2022 (l-r): Rick Savage, Vivian Campbell, Rick Allen and Phil Collen

were gonna do, after that kind of giant *Star Wars* production trilogy of *Pyromania*, *Hysteria* and *Adrenalize*, was try something else, a different approach. It might have coincided with grunge, but it was more about changes within our own little unit. Some of us were getting married, some were getting divorced, some were having kids, some of us had parents dying. These were things that hadn't encroached on our lives when it came to making records; up to that point it had always been about celebrating being in a band, celebrating music we loved, nothing more. But by that time other things were started to leak into our songwriting, and things were happening that changed who we were [drummer Rick Allen lost an arm in a 1985 car accident, guitarist Steve Clark died from alcohol poisoning in 1991]. We were older, and it was time to move on from the flowery stuff, just to see what we could do. Are we capable of making a different kind of record? Not necessarily more grown-up, just from a different point of view.

We'd sold millions of records, filled arenas all over the world, but we saw *Slang* as an opportunity to go back to Ground Zero, to try something that might surprise us as much as it surprised our fans. We joked about it; when we were recording our working title was *Commercial Suicide*, because we knew the songs we were doing weren't gonna be smash hits like Pour Some Sugar On Me – because we knew we weren't writing anything designed to be the next smash hit. We were really happy with the results, because the songs came from within. Mutt wasn't involved, it was just us cutting the umbilical cord, allowing ourselves to float into space like Major Tom. None of us knew if we'd ever come back from it, and we were absolutely fine with that. It wasn't a reaction to grunge, it was a reaction to our own past work, and I know, to this day, it's seen as the Marmite album with our fans. Some were horrified, some think it's the best thing we've ever done. I heard recently that it's Jack White's favourite Def Leppard album because he thinks it was a "brave" move, but for us it was more about moving forward. We've not been complacent at any point since *Slang* – is that brave, or is it just sensible?

What did you think of VH1's 2001 "docudrama" biopic *Hysteria: The Def Leppard Story*?

Bloody awful, wasn't it? It was flattering that someone took the time and money to make a biopic of us, but you don't wanna see it – it's shite. I mean, it was a nice try, God bless 'em, and it was a long time before the good ones about Queen and Elton, which suggests we must be held in high stead somewhere in the film world!

Have you been following the subsequent career of Orlando Seale, the actor who played you? He went on to join the cast of medical drama *Casualty* for a year and was in an episode of *The IT Crowd* where the main gag was his character's name, Peter File.

He wasn't the worst actor in it by a long stretch – some of our parents had accents that weren't even remotely near where they grew up. Also, it was filmed in Canada by people who'd clearly never been to the UK, because you'd have road signs reading Sheffield 9 miles, Manchester 3. Jesus Christ! Do your research, people! I did do a bit of script-doctoring on it, because some of it, on the page, was *sooo* wrong, way off the mark. They had guys in the band years before they actually joined, stuff like that, where our fans would have just *slaughtered* them for fucking things up. I mean, Orlando was alright, apart from him being 5ft 9 and I'm 6ft 1, but there were loads of little things they put in for no earthly reason. There's a scene where the bloke playing my dad is stroking the family dog. What fucking dog?! We never had a dog!

Dubious dramatisations of your story aside, people were referring to Def Leppard as "survivors" as long as 30 years ago, for having the strength to carry on after Rick's accident and Steve's death. Were there ever times you considered disbanding? Where did you find the drive to continue?

I think both individually and collectively we went through a bit of a wobble after Steve died, but it didn't last very long. By nature, people mourn and move on, you allow yourself a period of reflection and then get back to getting on with things. We were halfway through making an album [*Adrenalize*] when Steve died, and it would have been weird to just abandon it. Finishing it wasn't easy, but we felt a responsibility to the fans – and to ourselves – to suck it up and get on with it. I still think that album was us treading water, not through lack of ambition, but because we were in such a mess, emotionally, and it wasn't that long after what had happened to Rick. I mean, really? How much more do you wanna throw at us?

But in an odd way it made us feel more at ease with who we were, what we'd done, and where we were going next. I think it's the mindset we still subscribe to now, to be the best of ourselves and strive to be better than our past selves. Sometimes I think about those albums that sold crazy amounts and where they sit in our story. We've done *Pyromania*, we've done *Hysteria*, and none of us want to do 'em again, not without anything new. I think everybody's ready for the next part of the journey. We're always gonna give you echoes of the Def Leppard you want, but we're gonna give you more than that.

Diamond Star Halos *is on Mercury.*

PTO for Leppard discography…

Reservoir Leppards: Joe and co stick to their strong suits

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87 Phonogram LEPC 1 **Animal/Animal (Extended Mix)/Tear It Down** (12", red vinyl, p/s) **£15**

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***Discography taken from the* RRPG.**

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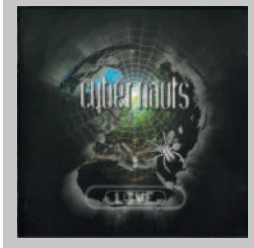
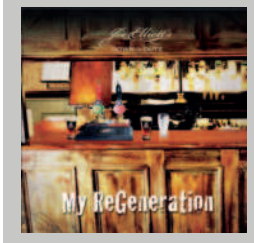
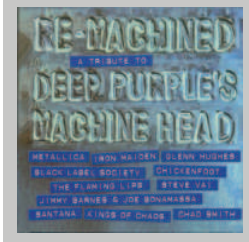


CYBERNAUTS *Live* (Arachnophobia ASO 2001, CD, UK, 2001) **£75**
Elliott and fellow Leppard Phil Collen hook up with Spiders From Mars Trevor Bolder and Woody Woodmansey for a set of Bowie hits, recorded live in Dublin.



DOWN'N'OUTZ *My ReGeneration* (Mailboat MDB 9510, CD, US, 2010) **£8**
Accompanied by members of The Quireboys, Elliott delves into Ian Hunter deep cuts. The band opened for Mott The Hoople at their 2009 reunion shows in London.



VARIOUS *Re-Machined – A Tribute To Deep Purple* (Eagle EAGLP 494, LP, UK, 2012) **£8**
Metal royalty including Iron Maiden and Metallica take on tracks from Deep Purple's seminal *Machine Head* album. The Elliott-fronted Kings Of Chaos cover Never Before.

VARIOUS *The Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert* (Eagle Vision EV 306289, DVD, US, 2013) **£20**
Multi-artist salute to the Queen frontman from Wembley Stadium in 1992. Elliott and Slash join surviving members of the band for Tie Your Mother Down.

DOWN'N'OUTZ *This Is How We Roll* (UMC 7768225, LP, UK, 2019) **£7**
Elliott's Hunter/Hoople covers band return, but with new and mostly self-penned material, including the heartfelt David Bowie tribute Goodbye Mr Jones.

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HAY-ON-WYE Sunday 17th July - Butter Market, HR3 6YG
NEWPORT *(*NEW VENUE*)* Saturday 23rd July - Dolman Theatre, 8 Emlyn St. Kingsway Centre, NP20 1H
PENARTH Sunday 24th July - St Cyres School, Sully Road, CF64 2XP
TRURO Saturday 30th July - St George's Church Hall, St George's Road, TR1 3JA
REDRUTH Sunday 31st July - Community Centre, Foundry Road, TR15 1AW
WEYMOUTH Saturday 6th August - Royal Hotel, Esplanade, DT4 7AX
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(£1 Entry)

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X-RATED

Even given their stellar ZTT labelmates – Frankie Goes To Hollywood and Art Of Noise – Propaganda stood out: think ABBA produced by a maximalist, Wagnerian Kraftwerk. It is now 37 years since their darkly cinematic debut album, *A Secret Wish*. Yet in re-forming the group as **xPropaganda** to make a belated follow-up with their original co-producer, Stephen Lipson, Claudia Brücken and Susanne Freytag believe that they are fulfilling a long-held ambition. The man without shadow: **David Stubbs**.

"It's an old desire – we didn't want the first album to be the only one out there," says Claudia Brücken, formerly of Propaganda, now xPropaganda. "We tried many times to make a follow-up album to *A Secret Wish*, but it just didn't happen. So, Susanne and I, we just kept going. We always felt, we want to do this."

Brücken and Susanne Freytag are sitting together on a sofa, sharing a Zoom connection. Despite the Nico-like deadpan severity and lipstick hauteur they sometimes project on record, in person, they are pleasant, good-humoured, wreathed in smiling excitement and gratitude at the belated chance they've been afforded to follow up their 1985 debut (1990's *1234* was largely the work of a different line-up).

The Heart Is Strange does not disappoint. In terms of its aesthetic, its ambition, it seeks no place in the context of 21st-century pop. It is a thing unto itself – in some senses, an imaginary second album, a What Might Have Been album that Actually Is.

"Yes!" agrees Freytag. "But it's a different name and with that, a new energy."

The germ of the idea came from a 2018 gig at the Highbury Garage in London, which can be viewed on YouTube. The dimension of artifice to Propaganda/xPropaganda is cheerfully waived. It bristles with the colour, the wet exuberant joy, of simply playing. However, they felt that the set list, comprising *A Secret Wish*, was a little short and they would need to write additional songs to make it up to a full programme. And so, why not write more songs? They decided to consult Stephen Lipson, who had produced *A Secret Wish* under the "supervision" of Trevor Horn, the latter having been compelled to prioritise the erupting success of Frankie Goes To Hollywood. He is a key player on the new album.

"Every good writer has ideas, fragments of things that they haven't used yet, so we asked Stephen if he would go through his notebook and see if he could find anything appropriate for us," says Brücken. "He sent fragments, grooves for us to pick up and that was the starting point. Beauty Is Truth was one of the first songs that we wrote together. But with Only Human and Ordinary Girl, it was the other way around – we wrote them and took them to Stephen. Mostly, though, we start with the groove, the backing track, then think about the melody, words."

"We definitely didn't feel like we were following any trend with this album," adds Freytag. True, *The Heart Is Strange* has a certain carefree, swashbuckling fearlessness about it. Now, more than ever before, not least the subtly constrained 80s, you can do and be, whatever the consequences. There's no agenda to abide by, no yardstick by which to measure "relevance". Instead, absolute existential freedom. The hell with it.

"We said when we started this that we weren't going to worry about how this album was going to be received, where it fit, what

"IT'S A DIFFERENT NAME AND, WITH THAT, A DIFFERENT ENERGY"

people would say about it – we would just do exactly what we wanted to do," Brücken says. "A very artistic freedom. Nothing to fear." "And in our own time, too," adds Freytag.

The very artwork of *The Heart Is Strange*, monochrome and red, exudes boldness, severity, passion, and has a cinematic quality: a human heart is depicted in the Constructivist style of El Lissitzky, who painted *Beat The Whites With The Red Wedge*, a piece of propaganda in itself as the Soviets did battle with counter-revolutionaries, the White Russians.

The contents make good on the promise of the album cover: The Night begins with a flourish, a silvery unveiling, as the sequencer motor purrs into action, beneath a fanfare of synthesised horns and aerial, velvet sweeps. As was Propaganda's wont, they push the symphonic, the cinematic, to widescreen extremes few others would dare. The lyrical aphorisms glitter: "eye to eye and lip to lip…", somehow benefitting from English as a second language in their starkness. Take "a string inside me is broken" – a line delivered with Nico-esque matter-of-factness, deadpan lucidity, no qualms. Chasing Utopia is a thing of wistful beauty, skipping with the elaborate rhythmical grace of a Matthew Dear – you sense the long shadows of the 80s club scene. Beauty Is Truth takes its cue from John Keats' deceptively confounding line, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty". ("Lies, lies, lies," they add with typical paradoxical perversion.) There's nothing equivocal about Don't (You Mess With Me), meanwhile, an unsmiling smackdown delivered from this imaginary return to the pre-laddism era.

The beats, the textures, are immaculately wrought, retaining all the grandeur of those mid-80s ZTT productions but with the freshness, the slickness, the retro-free just-bought aroma of a luxury vehicle. *The Heart Is Strange* is replete with historical points of comparison – film noir, Nico, Romantic poetry, Edgar Allen Poe, Yello, David Bowie, Garbo (check Only Human) – and yet it is entirely new-fangled and entirely of xPropaganda's making.

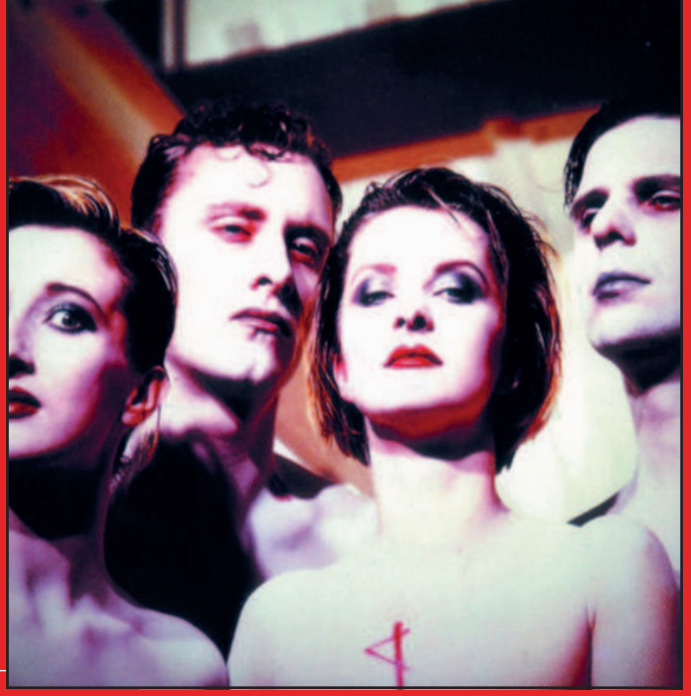
"As you get older your perception of time changes," says Brücken. "But working with Stephen it felt like no time had passed at all." It's true – to those of us of a certain age, the gap between 1985 and 2022 feels much more compressed than, say, the gap between 1948 and 1985. Less cultural water seems to have flowed under the bridge in this century in particular – despite the brilliant music yielded, there's been less sense of (a) major movement.

And yet, at the same time, there have been huge circumstantial changes, certainly for the members of xPropaganda, from the very process of recording to the liberation of not having to make your name and prove yourself to the world.

"Things have very much changed," says Freytag. "We are far more happy and relaxed now. We feel that we can try things that in the past we would have hesitated to do."

Brücken and Freytag were raised in Düsseldorf, coming of age at the ideal time – the perfect cradle. A neat and architecturally dapper town, in contrast to its close neighbour and rival Cologne (whose upwardly sprawling cathedral speaks of its historical temperament), the city that yielded the controlled frenzy of Can, Düsseldorf was, of course, home to Kraftwerk and their Klingklang studios – Ralf

Main Photo: Anton Corbijn



"Everybody had a role to play; we weren't puppets, nothing was imposed on us' – Propaganda photographed by Anton Corbijn for the cover of *A Secret Wish*, 1985 (left to right): Michael Mertens, Susanne Freytag, Claudia Brücken, Ralf Dörper; (pictured right) in '84, before Dr Mabuse hit the charts

Hütter and the boys could just occasionally be spotted out and about in the venues and cafes frequented by the town's close-knit hipster community. It was also home to Neu!, who bequeathed the world the motorik Dingerbeat, deemed one of the vital rhythmical arteries of the 70s by Brian Eno. These weren't just local heroes – these were groups that remade modern music, even if, in Neu!'s case, this was only properly recognised long after the fact.

By the early 80s, krautrock had given way to punk as filtered through West German countercultural sensibilities. Though more brutalist than its 70s predecessors, it was equally formally innovative, steeped in electronics courtesy the likes of DAF, Der Plan and Die Krupps, whose Ralf Dörper would become a member of Propaganda.

"It's because it was such a small city that there were certain bars and hangouts where everyone into this music went and you knew where to find them," Freytag muses. "It was similar to Manchester with the Hacienda. Not just musicians but artists. And everyone wanted to be in a band. An electronic band." "All at the same clubs, dancing to the same music," adds Brücken.

Düsseldorf was also a vortex for the visual and commercial arts. "Advertisers and graphic designers would hang out at these places as well," Brücken recalls. This enabled a sense of the conceptual, the formal, to feed into music-making and the ambitions of music-makers – they could do more than provide a mere sonic stream of chords. They could throw shapes, paint pictures.

Propaganda formed in 1982, maintaining about them a sense of punk's seaminess and the ambition of the electronic avant garde. The original trio were Freytag on vocals, Ralf Dörper, and visual artist Andreas Thein. They were subsequently joined by classically trained musician Michael Mertens and Brücken (who had worked with Freytag in the all-female Topolinos) on vocals. There was a duality, explicitly referenced on Propaganda's 1985 hit Duel, whose luxurious, pop-ist surfaces on the A-side are counterpointed by a "nasty" B-side remix which speaks to a love of Throbbing Gristle with its radical depths.

However, they were arriving on the West German scene at the point when the radical electronic post-punk emanating from Düsseldorf was about to be codified into Neue Deutsche Welle. That scene would enjoy international success – via Trio's Da Da Da and, later Nena's 99 Red Balloons – but it was more dilute.

"DUSSELDORF WAS LIKE MANCHESTER. INTO THE SAME CLUBS, THE SAME MUSIC"

Travelling to London, Propaganda decided to relocate. Although entryist UK pop – Scritti Politti, Associates, ABC, Simple Minds – had receded somewhat following its 1982 zenith, to give way to the likes of Howard Jones and the wilfully funkless Smiths, there was still a great club scene in London, a continuation of the new romantic tradition of radical hedonism, one unafraid of luxury, excess, while maintaining a sharply conscious left-field sensibility. Propaganda understood this but the connection to London was a joyful, personal one. "With the whole club scene, this wasn't just our careers, it was our youth," says Brücken.

They immediately caught the ear of the music press, John Peel and, significantly, the ZTT label. Paul Morley, who would go on to marry Brücken, had cheered the ultimately thwarted attempt at entryist pop with intoxicatingly lyrical and exhorting prose from his *NME* perch. He had co-founded ZTT, its title an acronym based on the sound poem Zang Tumb Tuum, written by Filippo Marinetti, founder of the Italian Futurist movement. He was part of a trio including producer Trevor Horn and his wife, businesswoman Jill Sinclair.

Their first release was March 1984's epic Dr Mabuse, an allusion to the character created by filmmaker Fritz Lang, which set out with the same expressionist aspirations. "It was originally a song written in German, so for us to make that transition was huge," Brücken explains. "Working with an orchestra and working in such a studio… And Trevor is very meticulous in the way that he works. Stephen, too – and us also! It was a big process."

It must have been easy to have felt overawed. "I'd never been in a really proper recording studio before," Brücken admits. "Yet, I actually felt uninhibited. I would make these requests, try things out, and they were granted."

"Perhaps that's the ignorance of youth," suggests Freytag. "'OK, bring it on!'" "Everybody had a role to play," Brücken offers. "We weren't puppets; nothing was imposed on us."

Mabuse was huge. Dancing to it at nightclubs, the extended mix was quite exhausting, like dancing to Beethoven. As always with Propaganda there was a sense that they might have made further chart headway had they decided to give less. Mabuse, and the 1985 album *A Secret Wish* which followed,

were monuments to electronic pop grandeur in an era preceding the return to a more minimal, manageable scale heralded by house, garage, acid, and techno.

"The Synclavier, the Fairlight," recalls Brücken of those studio sessions. "They were having a real laugh, taking it to extremes. Stephen still has that. He just goes for it."

To the likes of Poe, Lang, Nico and Throbbing Gristle, Brücken and Freytag mention Talking Heads, Frank Zappa, Patti Smith and The Pet Shop Boys as elements which helped shape their sound – a transatlantic but also strongly European sensibility which would, sadly, disappear from British pop as the decade wore on.

Although the success of Frankie meant Propaganda were unable to receive Trevor Horn's undivided attention, Brücken and Freytag relished the proximity to pop superstardom that being their stablemates allowed. "It was hugely exciting, watching Frankie's success," Brücken admits. "It was hard to believe that here I was in London, and this was happening. Masses of fans waiting for the boys, the screaming. It was extraordinary. Yes, it meant Trevor could not produce us but that meant we got to work with Stephen."

"Also," adds Freytag, "Trevor was there all the time, we were all working in the same complex in Basing Street and the office of ZTT. The boss was always listening, giving his thoughts, like a sort of executive producer."

Playing *The Tube*, a show they loved, made them feel like they were on top of the pop world. After this, however, things unravelled. There was controversy as Paul Morley unwisely decided to include a quote from JG Ballard on the sleevenotes to the 12" single p:Machinery, praising the activities of the West German terrorist group, Red Army Faction. Ariola, who distributed ZTT's releases in West Germany, refused to carry the single until the notes were changed. Both Brücken and Freytag wince at this memory. "We grew up in those times. it was on our minds," says Brücken. "It was so brutal. It was a reaction to a German society in which a lot of old Nazis were still around." (There was, incidentally, no remotely significant connection between the RAF and the West German avant garde. When Andreas Baader was found dead in his cell, the LP on his record player was by Eric Clapton.)

The acrimonious split with ZTT – who, the group learned, had them tied to an onerous contract – led to Propaganda breaking up. Brücken left the band while remaining with the label. Time seems to have dimmed the sad memories of all this, the upshot of which was the prolonged delay of any follow-up album.

"It just happened, really, for its own reasons and such a long time ago," accepts Brücken. "Once the decisions were taken it was hard – Michael and Susanne decided to leave, I decided to stay. Because I really wanted to work with these people. They were an amazing team, and I didn't want to give that up. And I felt I wouldn't get that outside ZTT. Susie and Michael made their decision but, since then, our desire to get back together never went away."

Propaganda was relaunched with a different vocalist, Betsi Miller, in 1988, while in 1998, Mertens, Brücken and Freytag recorded a handful of tracks including one featuring Martin Gore of Depeche Mode on guitar. It didn't work out but there were fitful attempts to revive Propaganda in some form, with some original members, during the 21st century – the original line-up performed Dr Mabuse in 2004 at a Wembley Arena showcase in celebration of Trevor Horn, then in 2005 with just Freytag and Mertens. Eventually, Dörper and Mertens receded from the picture. Sporadic as they were, however, all of these ventures enjoyed some success – the flame was still alive, the affection for Propaganda still lingered. In 2022, it has been spectacularly reignited.

I wonder if, without lapsing into stereotypes, there is something of the Germanic that informs xPropaganda's sense of ambition, of architectural scale, unencumbered by any British fear of pretentiousness, an aesthetic attitude which has helped them endure?

"Yes, I think maybe that's true," Brücken replies. Adds Freytag, "What we love about Stephen is he, too, is like that. He just does what he wants. It's like a playground."

"Yes, it's not just a German thing – David Bowie has that unapologetic attitude," Brücken suggests. "But you're right, we have no fear of the word 'pretentious' at all." RC

The Heart Is Strange ***is released by UMC/the newly relaunched ZTT.***

Freytag and Brücken today as xPropaganda: "A very artistic freedom – nothing to fear"

Photos: Kai Freitag: Anton Corbijn; Peter Brown

BRUCKEN PROMISES

PROPA PROJECTS AND PRECURSORS

Topolinos

Formed by Sabine Wolde of Croox and featuring Claudia Brücken and Susanne Freytag, Topolinos were an all-female new wave group from Düsseldorf – Brücken and Freytag's first musical venture. A track like Rote Fahnen, released on the 1986 compilation *Lebensmittelsex*, is raw, scratchy, and bristling with serrated guitar reverb. Yet there is a certain rigidity of intent which hints at what was to come, as well as a punkish sensibility which they retain to this day.

Die Krupps

Formed in 1980 and named after a German steel dynasty, Die Krupps were co-founded by vocalist Jürgen Engler and, until 1982, featured Propaganda's Ralf Dörper on keyboards. On the metal-bashing 1981 single Wahre Arbeit, Wahre Löhn ("A Fair Day's Work For A Fair Day's Pay"), it's Dörper who provides the authentic industrial undergirding which would be so crucial an underpinning to Propaganda's magnificent artifice. Die Krupps continue to this day, with Dörper having rejoined the group.

Propaganda – the Virgin years

In 1988, a version of Propaganda featuring (initially) Ralf Dörper, Michael Mertens and Susanne Freytag signed to Virgin. They were augmented by bassist Derek Forbes and drummer Brian McGee, both formerly of Simple Minds, as well as American vocalist Betsi Miller. A 1990 album, *1234*, followed, while a single Heaven Give Me Words, co-written by Howard Jones, reached the Top 40. Dörper and Freytag receded from this iteration of Propaganda, which, though responsible for some very pleasant electro-pop, bore little aesthetic resemblance to the mid-80s version of the group.

Act

Having stalled in his own solo pop career, Thomas Leer (see *RC* 532) decided a duo might be the best option and joined forces with Brücken, estranged from Propaganda but still with ZTT. They recorded one album, 1988's *Laughter, Tears And Rage*, which carried itself in the grand, epic, luxuriously produced manner of ZTT, and featured some quite gorgeous work, even if, by this point, the era of Trevor Horn-produced grandiloquence was fading.

THE LINX EFFECT

In 1981, Britfunk – Light Of The World, Freeez, Central Line, Beggar & Co et al – was enjoying its moment in the sun. Briefly the most highly touted of the scene were **Linx**: David Grant and Peter 'Sketch' Martin, a sort of homegrown Chic or Steely Dan, a duo with endless ideas and options who, for a period, really did feel like the future. But by 1982, they were done. **David Grant** recalls the time they rose and shone. Wonder what he's doing now: **Daryl Easlea**

Hard to believe now, but in the early days of 1981, *Intuition*, the debut LP by Linx, was as cool as anything by Chic, Talking Heads or Gang Of Four. The north London band, fronted by singer David Grant and bassist Peter 'Sketch' Martin, were adored by both jazz-funkateers and the *NME* / *The Face* rock criterati. With their mixed-race line-up and songs that owed as much to UK pop as American soul, Linx created a pared-down but dynamic sound that bequeathed at least five classic singles: You're Lying, Rise And Shine, Intuition, Throw Away The Key and So This Is Romance.

And they cut quite the dash: Grant, easy-going, bespectacled in his tuxedo, throwing a few post-*Off The Wall* Michael Jackson shapes; Sketch, a man of few words, otherworldly in the background. Working with keyboard player Bob Carter, one of the great unsung producer/writers of the 80s, drummer Andy Duncan and guitarist Canute Edwards, Linx looked different enough, yet familiar enough to be welcomed into the milieu of *Top Of The Pops* while retaining a leading edge.

The Linx story begins in the world of music and audio retail – a breeding ground for many acts over the years. "I used to work in a hi-fi shop in Tottenham called Tandy," David Grant recalls. "My cousin [Joe Williams] was on his way to becoming a manager. I'd just left school after some disappointing A-levels; I could have got into Kingston or Hatfield Poly, but I just couldn't afford it. I went to school in Tottenham, but I lived in Hackney which was a relatively poor borough – if you hadn't hit certain grades, getting a grant would be difficult. I needed to start bringing money into the family kitty."

Grant began working in the same branch where his cousin was manager and was put on a management training course himself. One fateful day, Sketch walked in looking for a stylus. "I thought, this guy looks a bit shady. These were the days before CCTV, so I followed him surreptitiously around the store, pretending I was doing other things," Grant laughs. "He actually started chatting and I thought he was a very cool geezer, and we left it at that."

Around a year later, Grant and Williams opened a shop, Sheraton in Tottenham, importing and distributing records: "Except we weren't making any money as we didn't understand margins very well. We were enthusiasts learning business at our own expense, on the job." Sheraton had been a butcher's previously and had a sizeable back room. "A local group came in and asked if they could rehearse – they didn't have any money and had been turfed out of their rehearsal room. They were called Light Of The World. Cousin Joe started managing them, and we had a guy who started working in the shop called Bluey [*Jean-Paul 'Bluey' Maunick – Jazz-Funk Ed*]."

Together, Grant and Maunick dabbled in a band called New Life, yet soon Maunick was to join LOTW, rehearsing out the back, before later forming Incognito. "Bluey could play guitar, but I was just a singer, and they didn't want me in the band," says Grant.

"NO ORGAN OR BRASS. KEEPING IT TIGHT AND FUNKY"

Instead, he decided to found his own group, and remembered that he'd bumped into Sketch Martin again at Notting Hill tube station, perfectly randomly, and taken his number. In the days of crossed lines, Grant was calling Martin at the same time that a guitarist friend of Sketch's, Burt Salvari, was calling, and so Grant had what would now pass as a three-way conference call. Sketch and Salvari were in a group called Headquarters, with Burt's brother Steve and vocalist Linton Beckles – who would both go off to form Central Line. Grant suggested the three of them on the call get together.

"We used a rehearsal room in Islington that Light Of The World didn't use because it had holes in the ceiling, and when it rained we'd have to move the gear," he recalls. "In winter, we'd huddle round the paraffin heater. We couldn't afford to tour, so what we'd do is get together five days a week and write songs."

Later, when the band got their first record deal, Grant explains, "We had some communication from an ex-member's lawyer saying that, when we've decided on what is going on the album, our client would like a percentage. So, Sketch said, Let's write a whole new album. The fact that we had spent the previous two years songwriting meant that we could. Although there's the old adage that people have their whole life to write their first album, ours was written in two to three months." A couple of the original songs, recorded at Berwick Street Studios in London in '78/'79, have made it onto the group's new 4CD collection on Cherry Red.

For the first 18 months of their rehearsing, they had yet to find a name. One day, Grant was reading the *Daily Mirror* when he saw an advert for the RAF which used a picture of a lynx ("an amazing cat with big ears"). Grant thought it a great name for a band. "Sketch immediately liked it, but he said we should change the spelling from a 'y' to an 'i'. We really loved it," he explains its modernist appeal. "We loved the group Chic – we loved the name because it was a single syllable. We'd been used to the Commodores, Con Funk Shun and Earth, Wind & Fire."

Grant explains that, at the time, Linx were a five-piece: Earl Appleton (keyboards), Burt Salvari, (future member of Simple Minds) Mel Gaynor on drums, Sketch and Grant. Appleton soon departed for, briefly, Light Of The World, while the other two were, says Grant, "becoming dissatisfied". He and Sketch, however, "were gung-ho".

"We wrote [debut single] You're Lying in the rehearsal room one day," Grant remembers. "We needed advice, so we reached out to Brian Freshwater at EMI/ScreenGems who had a great track record; he'd signed The Jam's publishing. He kept saying we didn't have a single yet. We came in with the roughest possible version of You're Lying and he said, 'THIS IS A HIT.' Brian was that old-school music guy and lent us £1,000 of his own money to record it."

By then, Gaynor's heart was in other places, but he played on it, with Salvari on guitar. Grant and Martin took it back to Freshwater who said it wasn't up to standard. He introduced them to drummer Andy Duncan and keyboard player Bob Carter who'd been playing with Hazel O'Connor. Carter immediately saw the potential of You're Lying and helped Grant and Martin restructure it, adding the breakdown in the middle. Grant and Martin were initially sceptical; as old soul boys they knew that once a groove had been hit, it should be maintained; none of this "going quiet and coming back" like they did in rock. "Bob said, 'Trust me on this.' And he was absolutely right," Grant says. "It was part of what made the record."

Grant and Martin made two key decisions that would further set Linx apart. "We were not going to have an organ or any brass," he says. "We wanted to keep it tight, funky and

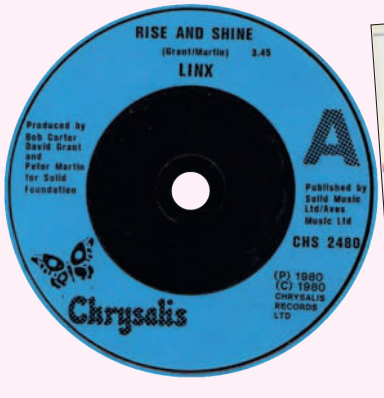


Photo: Getty

rhythm section-orientated." Andy Duncan listened to Mel Gaynor's drum track through his headphones and matched it beat for beat, Carter played keyboards, Salvari guitar and Sketch bass. Freshwater did a deal with the publishing company, Aves, to put their name on it to cover the cost of the pressing. "We're here to groove you" was etched into its run-out groove by master-cutter George 'Porky' Peckham. It was a clear statement of intent.

With 1,000 copies pressed, Grant went into City Sounds records in Holborn, with a boxful after Record Shack turned him down and Contempo bought three copies. "There was a guy there called Mick Clark. He listened to it and went round the back and spoke to the owner. He came back and asked how many I had. After telling him I had 22 copies with me, he replied, 'No, in total.' I told him that I had 977!" City Sounds bought them all. Linx got their money back right away.

On Saturday 9 August 1980, the day after David Grant's 24th birthday, Robbie Vincent played You're Lying on his influential BBC Radio London show. "I was in bed recovering, and Robbie had DJ Graham Canter [*known as 'Fatman' – Jazz-Funk Ed*] on to play some of the new tunes. He said, 'What's really kicking for me at the moment is this new Britfunk band from Hackney called Linx,' and played You're Lying. I jumped out of bed screaming with joy."

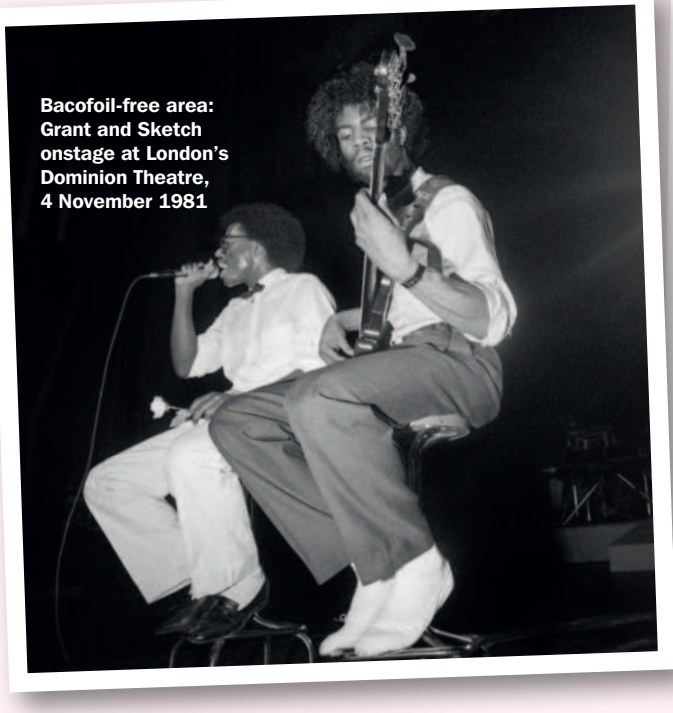
Sadly, the joy was abruptly halted when Burt Salvari informed Grant and Martin he was leaving the group, despite receiving a joint writing credit on the single. Still, there was no stopping Linx. You're Lying became one of the great underground hits of summer 1980. Freshwater got Linx a deal with Chrysalis, which although distributed by Phonogram, was still an independent in spirit, a mini-major that had been enjoying success with Blondie and Jerry Dammers' 2-Tone imprint. Canute Edwards replaced Salvari on guitar, and now, with Carter and Duncan in the background, the emphasis was fully on the duo of Grant and Martin.

"After Burt left, the template for us was Steely Dan," Grant explains. "We wanted to be able to use the people who were best placed to serve the song." Linx looked different, too: "I loved tuxedos, because I loved 1930s films," he reasons. "I bought one from a second-hand shop. My mum wasn't best pleased, as back then, shopping at charity and vintage stores meant you couldn't afford new clothes. That was that generation's philosophy."

Worn with a white shirt or T-shirt, the spectacle-wearing Grant created a singular look, offset by Sketch in his dark glasses and beret. "People think that was an image, but when I first met him, that was what he was wearing." Grant soon began to notice fans in tuxedos and shirts coming out to see them. He was also keen that Linx would be rooted in reality and not the cosmic trappings of the US soul collectives. "Sketch and I used to say, 'We can't write about pyramids, we can't wear Bacofoil, because you wouldn't wear that in Hackney, you wouldn't wear it in Canning Town. Unless you want to get beaten up.'"

On the advice of Brian Freshwater, Martin and Grant formed The Solid Foundation, after noticing US outfits they admired had their own production and publishing companies. Earth, Wind & Fire had their ARC (American Recording Company) where they owned their masters and leased them to the record company. "I didn't understand what it meant intellectually, but I felt instinctively that you could have more control of your music in the long-term, if there was going to be a long-term. We had our own production company, and our own publishing that would revert back to us in time. Sketch and I always used to say: it's show business, and if you don't control the business, someone else runs the show."

After second single Rise And Shine stalled in early '81, Chrysalis were uncertain about proceeding with the album – until, that is, they heard the demo of Throw Away The Key.



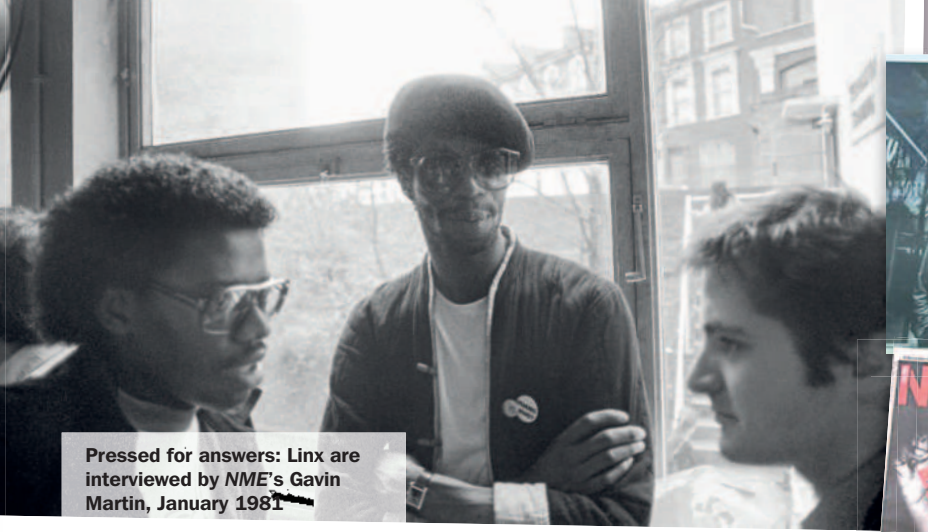
Bacofoil-free area: Grant and Sketch onstage at London's Dominion Theatre, 4 November 1981

"WE WERE MORE NEW CROSS THAN NEW YORK"

Then came the track Intuition. "Sketch said we need to do something to reflect our heritage: let's put steel pans on it – what a great idea." Intuition became a hit – partially because, during a technician's strike at the BBC, *Top Of The Pops* needed videos to play, and Linx had one. "Intuition had been creeping up the charts slowly, and had got to No 41, but seemed to be losing momentum," Grant recalls. The 12 March 1981 edition of the show was compiled from previously shown studio performances and available chart-climbing videos. In hindsight, the episode can be seen as a high watermark for Britfunk, with appearances by Freeez (for the immortally glacial Southern Freeez) and Beggar & Co. (whose rambunctious performance of [Somebody] Help Me Out in tramp garb was a *TOTP* classic). Linx rocketed from outside the Top 40 to No 25, before reaching No 7 in early April. The humorous video enhanced the infectious delight of the song.

With its Gered Mankowitz cover photography, *Intuition*, including the hits and the Police-like I Won't Forget, was a feat of dextrous musicianship and playful exuberance; a work of art. It was tremendously well-received. "It was extraordinary, we were very, very lucky," Grant considers. "Part of it was how stripped-down the music was; I think another factor was that we were very British – we weren't attempting to ape an American sound. We were more New Cross than New York, more Hackney than Harlem. We were the first of the British black groups to be on the front of *NME*."

It all happened so quickly. By August 1981, So This Is Romance, the first track from their second album, was released. Its languid vibe suited summer well, while that October, *Go Ahead* was released. It only reached No 35 in the charts, 27 places lower than its predecessor. An album was needed because a tour was booked – today, *Intuition* would have been allowed to play out and be plundered for singles and



Pressed for answers: Linx are interviewed by *NME*'s Gavin Martin, January 1981

promo. It was simply too soon for their Difficult Second Album.

"*Go Ahead* was a more complex work," Grant suggests with the benefit of hindsight. "Urban Refugee was written in our manager's office while we were watching the [nationwide summer '81] riots on the TV; it was reflective of the times we were living in, understanding the disconnection and disenfranchisement that had led to that response." Grant believes that, if I Won't Play The Game had been selected instead of Can't Help Myself as the second single from *Go Ahead*, it might have registered higher. Also, Martin broke his leg while rollerskating (a *very* disco injury) and was out for some of the sessions. When he returned, he didn't like all of what he heard, so they remade the record on a tight schedule.

Linx embarked on their only tour in November 1981, finishing with concerts at London's Dominion theatre, complete with Norman 'Junior' Giscombe on backing vocals – with whom Bob Carter co-wrote and produced the transatlantic pop-funk smash Mama Used To Say in early 1982. "When I was a kid, the first film my mum ever took me to was *The Sound Of Music* at the Dominion," Grant recalls. "Then I saw *Star Wars* there, on the day it came out in December 1977. I thought, 'One day, I want to be onstage here.' So, when we sold out three nights there, I thought, if nothing else happens beyond this, this has gone further than I ever imagined."

As 1982 dawned, Linx took some new tracks to Trevor Horn. "We thought that if we made it sound as polished as possible, he'd get it. Trevor wanted a picture of a stick man, so he could turn it into a Rembrandt. We'd already tried to do a poor man's version of Rembrandt. He said, 'I can see what you're doing here, just keep going.' And then he went off to work with ABC."

Two further singles were released by Linx: Plaything in July 1982 and Don't Hit Me With Love that autumn; the first reached No 58 in the chart, the second missed out altogether. Both could be seen as the start of Grant's solo career.

"We did two months of working with Tony Visconti, for what was going to be the third album," Grant says. "One day, Sketch and I sat down and had a chat. Sketch said, 'This isn't fun anymore, is it?' I replied, 'No, it just feels lonely.' We were trying to find stuff to write about. We could do the album – me, Sketch and Tony Visconti – and have a hit, tour it, yet not have any fun at all. Sketch said that when we started, we'd never wanted to build empires, we wanted to represent people and represent ourselves. At the point we stopped representing ourselves, we stopped doing it. And that was it. That was the last conversation we had about it. We told Tony, 'Sorry, mate, we're not continuing the album.'"

And that was that. No fall-out, no schism, just a mutual decision to end while they were friends. As a result, there are no horrible experiments with mid-80s machines or 90s "Linx say jungle is massive". To underline the difference in the duo's personalities, Grant had a successful solo career and a string of duets with Jaki Graham before becoming a vocal coach and much-loved TV personality; Sketch joined avant-funk troupe 23 Skidoo and delivered one of the most recognisable basslines of the past 40 years for the track Coup, later used as the main sample for the Chemical Brothers' Block Rockin' Beats.

More unbelievable still is that, while Grant is a regular on TV these days, Sketch is now a shepherd in west Ireland, and has worked as a falconer. "He writes songs and occasionally plays with the band in his local pub," Grant says. "I got in touch with him last year, we had really productive conversations. He sent me over musings of his and I wrote a song to one of them that I think is maybe the best song I've written in years. I'm trying to get hold of him, but I never can as he's in the middle of a field somewhere."

Grant continues to radiate Zen-like calm and enthusiasm, not least when he looks back on the glory days.

"We had a great team: Bob Carter [who sadly died of pancreatitis in the early 90s], Andy Duncan was great and Spike Edney, who played with us on tour, went off to be Queen's musical director. There was Junior [Giscombe]; our engineer at Good Earth was Chris Porter who went on to work with Wham! and do all the George Michael solo albums. It was great to be part of it. If I've made a single record that made a single person feel the way music made me feel, then it's all been worthwhile." RC

The Ultimate Linx *4CD box set is on Cherry Red*

LINX UK DISCOGRAPHY

SINGLES

80	Aves LINX 8001	**You're Lying (Long Version)/You're Lying (Short Version) (Part 2)** (12") **£20**
80	Chrysalis CHS 2461	**You're Lying/You're Lying (Instrumental)** (7") **£2**
80	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2461	**You're Lying (Long Version)/You're Lying (Instrumental)**((12") **£4**
80	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2461	**You're Lying (Long Version)/You're Lying (Instrumental)(Remix)** (12") **£5**
80	Chrysalis CHS 2480	**Rise And Shine/I Won't Forget (Instrumental)** (7") **£2**
80	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2480	**Rise And Shine/I Won't Forget (Instrumental)** (12") **£4**
81	Chrysalis CHS 2500	**Intuition/Together We Can Shine** (7", p/s) **£2**
81	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2500	**Intuition/Together We Can Shine** (12", p/s) **£4**
81	Chrysalis CHS 2519	**Throw Away The Key/The Ice Is Melting** (7", p/s) **£2**
81	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2519	**Throw Away The Key/The Ice Is Melting /Together We Can Shine (Version)** (12", p/s) **£4**
81	Chrysalis CHS 2546	**So This Is Romance/So This Is Romance (The Rio Mix)** (7", gloss p/s) **£3**
81	Chrysalis CHS 2546	**So This Is Romance/So This Is Romance (The Rio Mix)** (7", matt p/s) **£2**
81	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2546	**So This Is Romance/So This Is Romance (The Rio Mix)** (12", p/s) **£4**
81	Chrysalis CHS 2565	**Can't Help Myself/I'm Not Joking** (7", p/s) **£2**
81	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2565	**Can't Help Myself (Go-Ahead Mix)/Can't Help Myself (Out Front Mix)/I'm Not Joking (Long Version)** (12", p/s) **£4**
82	Chrysalis CHS 2621	**Plaything/I Won't Play The Game (Remix)** (7", p/s) **£2**
82	Chrysalis CHSP 2621	**Plaything/I Won't Play The Game (Remix)** (7", picture disc) **£3**
82	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2621	**Plaything (Extended Version)/I Won't Play The Game (Remix)** (7", p/s) **£2**
82	Chrysalis CHS 2650	**Don't Hit Me With Love/It's My Life** (7", p/s, billed as 'Linx featuring David Grant') **£2**
82	Chrysalis 12 CHS 2650	**Don't Hit Me With Love (Extended Version)/It's My Life (Extended Version)** (12", p/s, billed as 'Linx featuring David Grant') **£4**

ALBUMS

81	Chrysalis CHR 1332	**INTUITION** (LP, g/f insert) **£5**
81	Chrysalis CHR 1358	**GO AHEAD** (LP, printed inner) **£5**
83	Chrysalis CHR 1409	**THE LAST LINX** (LP) **£5**

REISSUES

11	Big Break CDBBR 0054	**INTUITION** (CD, super jewel case, 16-page booklet, six bonus tracks) **£15**
12	Big Break CDBBR 0091	**GO AHEAD** (CD, super jewel case, 16-page booklet, six bonus tracks) **£10**
22	Cherry Pop CRPOPBOX 241	**THE ULTIMATE LINX** (4CD, clamshell box, with individual wallets, 24-page booklet) **£20**

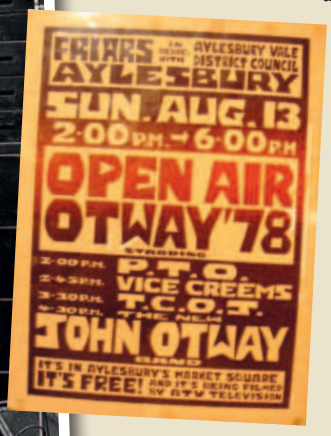
Photos: David Corio

EPIC FAIL

Really Free by **John Otway** (and Wild Willy Barrett) confirms what a wild, wide-ranging year 1977 was. Forty-five years after that striking near-novelty hit, Otway is still out there, gigging hard. Despite billing himself as 'Rock & Roll's Greatest Failure', on 2 April 2022 he reached the milestone of his 5,000th concert, an astonishing statistic matched by almost no one else in rock history. Here, he cites his 10 most memorable gigs.

Over a career stretching back more than 50 years, Aylesbury's favourite ~~one~~ two-hit wonder, John Otway, has played memorable (and a few less so) shows everywhere from pubs to market squares to festivals to the Royal Albert Hall. But a few stay long in the memory.

He tells *RC*: "I wrote this shortly before my 5,000th Gig at the Shepherds Bush Empire on 2 April. I think it's very likely that one of the shows mentioned here will fall out of the Top 10 and be overtaken by this new milestone gig. But for now, these are the ones that stand out…"



1 AYLESBURY MARKET SQUARE

13 August 1978 (Gig 388)

I had been doing annual free concerts in Aylesbury for the previous few years. It was a way of getting an audience when no one wanted to pay to see me. Really Free was a Christmas hit in 1977 and I was the first local artist to be in the charts and get on *Top Of The Pops*. I realised that the next Free Concert could be a pretty mega gig.

Dave Stopps, who promoted the very successful Friars Club, had been approached by ATV to do a piece on the local music scene. After hearing about my plans to take over the town centre the TV company decided to focus the programme on this event.

It was even bigger than my ego – 10,000 locals turned up. As ATV shot the event on film, I had what was probably the greatest event of my career, captured in wonderful Technicolor to use when I made [2013's] *Otway The Movie*.

2 THE LONDON PALLADIUM

6 October 2002 (Gig 3, 206)

Imagine what it's like to be a pop star – a one-hit wonder, from a single a quarter of a century ago – who is now approaching 50. He has started to believe that those hitless years will never end, until… It is pointed out to him that, while the charts are still compiled just by physical records, a small, avid fanbase could, in theory, provide him with another.

A hit campaign is launched and, with 100 percent belief that this theory is correct, he books the London Palladium for a gig on the night the chart is announced. Two thousand fans go bananas and drink the Palladium dry as DJ Johnnie Walker strides onstage to announce that Bunsen Burner is in the Top 10 – straight in at No 9.

3 THE LONDON ASTORIA

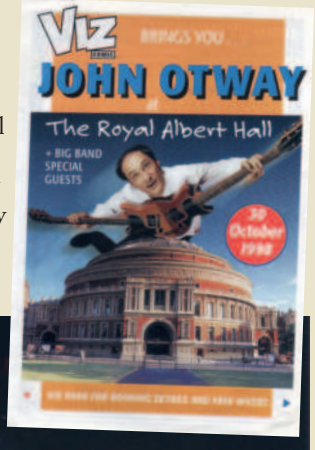
12 November 1993 (Gig 2,000)

The trajectory of my career after that incredible Aylesbury gig in '78 was decidedly downward. In fact, it got so bad that I wrote a self-effacing autobiography about how I had single-handedly made a mess of what could have been stardom. The publishers thought would be fun to promote the book as *Rock & Roll's Greatest Failure* (it was – I had so much fun that I've wholeheartedly embraced the role since).

It was a sensible move: audiences appreciated the honesty and started coming back. I had always kept a good record of my career and, in the 90s, the number 2,000 had an auspicious ring. So, in 1993 we decided to top the run of pub gigs leading up to this milestone with a gig at the 2,000-capacity London Astoria – it was a sell-out and I had turned a corner.

4 THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON
30 October 1998 (Gig 2,680)
It didn't take me long to realise that the RAH is just over twice the capacity of the Astoria. If he put in twice as much work, could Rock's Greatest Failure fill the country's most iconic venue? It was worth a go.

I remember being really impressed with Deep Purple's *Concerto For Group And Orchestra* – which they recorded with the Royal Philharmonic at the Royal Albert Hall – and I fancied doing something similar. I was in the Aylesbury Youth Orchestra as a teenager, and they were still going, so I'd found an orchestra I could afford.



5 THE LONDON ASTORIA 24 July 2002 (Gig 3,193)
I spent many years regretting all those unsuccessful records I had chosen to release and, with The Hit Campaign underway, it was unanimously decided that, with my track record, I should not be trusted with choosing the next release. A ballot was organised by the Electoral Reform Society so the fans could pick a song from a 12-track CD.

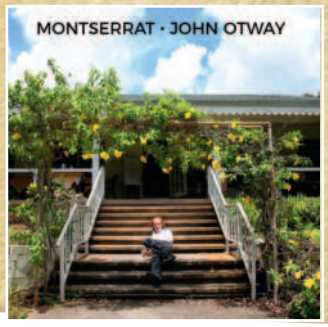
The election result was announced on 27 July. The band played each song and 'Miss Hit' or 'Miss Miss' compiled the potential Hit or obvious Flop charts at the side of the stage before announcing Bunsen Burner as the winner.

6 BBC TV CENTRE, LONDON 17 July 1977 (Gig 321)
I don't know if you can count a television performance as a gig, but if you can, then my performance on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* on 17 July 1977 was the single most career-changing moment of my life. It was my first bit of national TV and, knowing five million people would be watching, I was pumped up with adrenalin.

I had always attempted to hide my lack of musical ability with bits of mayhem and awkward acrobatics – and cometh the moment, cometh the star. An attempted leap onto guitarist Wild Willy Barrett's amplifier goes spectacularly wrong as I land on what is obviously a delicate part of my anatomy astride the hard wooden object. The viewers rewarded my stupidity with a hit record and the opportunity to play a further 4,679 gigs.

7 SOCA CABANA, LITTLE BEACH, MONTSERRAT
16 September 2016 (Gig 4,601)
Back in the 70s and 80s, if I'd had had more hits I would probably have enjoyed recording an album on the Island of Montserrat produced by Sir George Martin. But by the time I had worked out, by crowdfunding, how I could make my next record on the same Caribbean Island as Paul McCartney, Dire Straits and The Rolling Stones, the studios had been destroyed by a hurricane and a volcano.

So, pitching myself as the third natural disaster to hit the island, we built a studio in the basement of Sir George's house to record the *Montserrat Album*. While there, we booked an exotic beach bar and played for the Islanders and the 50 or so fans who came to support us.



8 QUATRE ECLUSE, DUNKERQUE, FRANCE
18 November 1995 (Gig 2,283)
Following Gig 2,000 [in 1993], I was aware that there would be a great deal of interest in "Gig 2001: A Space Otway" but I didn't want to steal any thunder from the main event – so I decided this event should not take place in the UK.

Australia and the USA were quickly rejected due to financial considerations and eventually it was decided to stage the event in Dunkerque, France.

The trip proved so popular that we returned every Beaujolais Nouveau weekend for the next 14 years (either side of a hiatus due to promoter issues between 2005 and 2008). I could have picked any one of the trips but chose this one in 1995 as the English Channel was the warmest that November.

We had a lot of special guests doing those trips – Wilko Johnson, Dr Feelgood – but the most special guest for me was Neil Innes, who had produced my first solo album, and played the last trip in 2011.

9 GRANGE SCHOOL, AYLESBURY June 1970 (Gig 1)
I've had a tendency to believe everything I do is really important, hence having a list of all my shows online. It was also why I made a tape recording of the first proper gig I ever did in the music room at Grange School in Aylesbury (below). It is quite shocking how many of the songs are still in the live show and how little I have improved. However, it went down surprisingly well – I got an encore on my first full Otway show and the success of that ensured that I would neglect my schoolwork and subsequently fail all four A-Levels.

10 READING FESTIVAL
28 August 1988 (Gig 1,366)
I've played the main stage of Reading Festival twice, the first time in 1978 and then, 10 years later, in 1988. The one in '88 is remembered as the year Meat Loaf got bottled offstage. That was on the Saturday night and I did the very next show on the Sunday lunchtime. I finished my set with a ridiculous song called Down The Road: "I want to hear Boris Becker down the road," I would sing, and be served with a microphone to bat across the stage with my guitar. "I want to hear Eddie The Eagle down the road," I'd continue, and I would leap off a speaker with a mic stand in each hand.

After doing Olga Korbut (involving parallel bars with the stage scaffolding) I thought it would be fun to do something relevant to the festival. "I want to hear Meatloaf down the road," I bellowed, followed by the stage-crew bottling me and encouraging the audience to join in. I believe we were the only act to complete our set that day.

Thanks to John Otway for the pics.
He plays the following shows this summer:
17 June Fiery Bird Woking (solo); 9 July Cheese & Grain Frome solo special guest of Wilko Johnson; 15 Jul Albert Hall Nottingham solo special guest of Wilko Johnson; 16 Jul Town Hall Cheltenham solo special guest of Wilko Johnson; 22 Jul Town Hall Birmingham solo special guest of Wilko Johnson. For a list of all 5,000 gigs (you know you want to), see www.johnotway.com

RC LOVES 1977

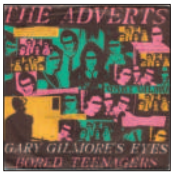
HEAVEN '77

77 REASONS WHY '77 WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR MUSIC

Nineteen sixty-six often gets cited as the best ever year for music, but really, **1977** merits contention for the crown. And not just because of the punk explosion that gave us Sex Pistols, The Clash, Buzzcocks and all the rest. It was also an amazing year for disco, funk, soul, reggae, metal, MOR, power pop, New York new wave, prog, proto-electronica/synthpop… everything! Over the next 14 pages, we name the 77 best singles and albums of '77 and speak to a dozen of the era's prime movers, from Elkie Brooks to Suicide

ABBA *The Album* (Epic EPC 86052, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
Released in Scandinavia in December '77, *The Album* (oh the vindicated hubris of that name) wasn't released in the UK until January '78 because the pressing plants couldn't cope with demand. No pressure, then: of course, the ice-cool Swedes delivered Take A Chance On Me and The Name Of The Game. Consummate pop.
RRPG editor note: *Debut UK single, Ring Ring/Rock'N'Roll Band, Epic EPC 1793, 1973, is worth £70*

AC/DC *Let There Be Rock* (Atlantic K 50366, LP, UK, 1977) **£30**
Recorded live in one room, barely in tune at times (but don't call them punks), the Aussie rockers' fourth outing was an electrifying shot of rock'n'roll adrenaline. The title track would become an epic showstopper, and in Whole Lotta Rosie you have one of *the* great three-note hard rock riffs.
RRPG editor note: *Mis-pressing, where both sides play Side 1, is worth £200*



The Adverts Gary Gilmore's Eyes (Anchor ANC 1043, 7", UK, 1977) **£10**
Grasping the possibilities inherent in punk's 'anything goes' ideology, their debut 45 introduced TV Smith as one of the era's most esteemed satirists. A No 20 hit, Gary Gilmore's Eyes also earned them a spot on *Top Of The Pops*, where their kohl-eyed bassist, Gaye Advert, shone like a star.
RRPG editor note: *Rare German pressing (Anchor 11 547 AT) worth £70*

Althea and Donna Uptown Top Ranking (Lightning LIG 506, 7", UK, 1977) **£4**
This inspired debut single from Althea Forrest and Donna Reid, just 17 and 18 respectively at the time, was produced by Joe Gibbs and utilised Trinity's Three Piece Suit. It was a John Peel favourite and hit the UK No 1, making them the youngest female duo to do so.
RRPG editor note: *Such a big hit, it was even released in the US (Sire SRE 1019) £15*

The Beach Boys *Love You* (Brother K 54087, LP, UK, 1977) **£5**
Marrying simple arrangements that evoked the innocence of their earliest recordings with future-shaping ARP and Minimoog synths that caught the new wave tide, *Love You*, performed almost entirely by Brian Wilson alone, was an unlikely precursor to the synth-pop 80s, its charm in part coming from lyrics that ignored much of the previous 15 years' worth of pop culture.
RRPG editor note: *The single, Roller Skating Child/Solar System, was only released in Japan (Brother/Reprise P 162 R) £30*

Bee Gees & Various Artists *Saturday Night Fever: Original Movie Soundtrack* (RSO 3517014, LP, UK, 1977) **£5**
The second-biggest soundtrack album ever (after *The Bodyguard*), this was disco's legacy-defining mountaintop. For the Bee Gees it was a happy accident: their contributions, requested by Robert Stigwood, were initially intended for a regular album of their own, and on camera Travolta had danced to Boz Scaggs' Lowdown. Fever struck; an inferno.
RRPG editor note: *The Trammps' Disco Inferno was originally released Stateside in 1976 (Atlantic 45 3389) £5*

Boney M *Love For Sale* (Atlantic K 50385, LP, UK, 1977) **£5**
If you were there back in 1977, Boney M were everywhere, dominating radio and laying enough pipe to form a line on *Top Of The Pops* that ran into 1978. Containing hits like Ma Baker and Belfast, this album sold so many copies they still get washed up in charity shops today.
RRPG editor note: *1981 LP* Boonoonoonoos *surprisingly hard to find in 2LP format (Atlantic K 50852 D) £25*

CLASS OF '77

Dwight Twilley

This should have been your big year. You were leading the American power pop revolution and the critically acclaimed *Twilley Don't Mind* was released. What happened?
I was always proud of that record, but the music business wasn't ready for it… I'm not sure whether the people were ready, but it wasn't presented to them. Our label, Shelter, was part of Arista which wasn't exactly a rock'n'roll label. It was more like Barry Manilow.

The Dwight Twilley Band had earlier had a Top 10 US single with I'm On Fire. It's inexplicable that there wasn't another.
Yes, we had Looking For The Magic, a really strong single, with Tom Petty playing the wakka-wakka guitar, but nothing happened. It did, however, make its way onto an unusually long list of motion picture soundtracks.

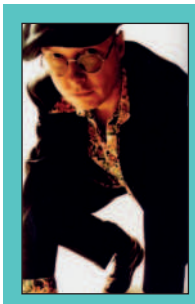
So, was 1977 a good year despite the lack of chart success?
It was a highpoint for Phil and me, we were turning out a lot of music. We hadn't long released our first album, *Sincerely*, which was quite a production. And *Twilley Don't Mind* was the cherry on the top – but that was about as far as Phil and I went. We split up after the many years we'd been togethers.

What set your music apart?
We were just doing the music we grew up on: a mix between Elvis and British music, American rock'n'roll and things that were based on the Fab Four.

There was a 50s tint with echoey vocals…
Yeah, I don't see how you can play rock'n'roll and not have echo! We were kinda oddballs, not your normal thing and not a lot of people to be compared with. It was British Presley!

Did you view yourselves as part of a movement with other power pop bands like the Rubinoos and Shoes?
Not really. I heard of the Rubinoos, but I wouldn't be able to hum a tune. Shoes, we heard about them all the time, people compared them to us.

Then later The Knack seemed to take on board what you were doing with My Sharona. Were you jealous?
I was happy when anybody had any sort of success. A lot of the time it seemed like people were putting a Twilley whack on their songs – that was no consolation but the whole adventure was a thing in itself!
Nick Dalton



CLASS OF '77

Andy Partridge, XTC

How was 1977 for you?
It was a joy, because it was the year music significantly changed for the better. The bin liner containing all the shit of the mid-70s finally burst, and everywhere you looked there were people being interesting again. There was still a lot of rubbish around, but even that had a bit of energy to it; bands were finding artistic ways to use the noise they were creating. The Ramones really did it for me, with their hybrid of metal and bubblegum – metalgum!

Would you say XTC rode the punk wave but had more to offer than most?
A lot of punk just sounded like pub rock on speed to me, but we were smart enough not to play down our ability and get lost in the glut. People would tell us, "Oh, you're too bloody clever for your own good," and I never really understood that. If you're capable of doing something with a modicum of wit and creativity, why on earth would you pretend you couldn't?

Compared to new wave's so-called DIY ethic, recording your debut *3D EP* at Abbey Road seemed like a fairly big deal.
To be perfectly honest, it meant very little to us at the time. I grew into an appreciation of it later, the whole biblical Beatle learning, but when engineers were showing us the piano on which McCartney recorded such and such, we really didn't care. We were too focused on our own music.

Was anything specific that year especially significant for the band?
We played London a hell of lot, which gave us plenty of opportunities to bombard John Peel's office with cassettes, and the significant thing was him booking us for a session on his show before we had a label deal. It got us noticed, to the point where the majors were literally squabbling over us in the street wherever we played.

What was your favourite record of 1977?
I remember being completely blown away by Devo's version of (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction. It was such brazen dismantling of a pop classic.

And who was your 1977 hero?
It was probably still Captain Beefheart at that stage, before reading a biography put me off him! I'd also suggest me; I know that sounds terribly arrogant, but I had to have a lot of belief to keep telling myself, "Come on, lad, you can do this."
Terry Staunton

David Bowie *Low* (RCA Victor PL 12030, LP, UK, 1977) **£70**
The 'Berlin trilogy' actually began in Chateau d'Herouville as Bowie, with innovator Brian Eno and producer linchpin Tony Visconti, digested art rock, krautrock and electronica and exhaled a dizzying, original musical vision, the influence of which still pervades. The same year, the equally hallowed *'Heroes'* followed. There's old wave, there's new wave, and…
RRPG editor note: One-sided excerpts From The New Album Low *promo (RCA BOW1 E) worth £1,500*

The Brothers Johnson *Right On Time* (A&M AMLH 64644, LP, UK, 1977) **£5**
Dismissed as bland and lifeless by early reviews, the brothers' sultry second album served as a showcase for Quincy Jones' pre-Jacko disco production. The sumptuous cover of Shuggie Otis's Strawberry Letter 23 gave it chart traction, and George and Louis were, briefly, as blazing as Earth, Wind & Fire.
RRPG editor note: *US audiophile edition of* Light Up The Night *(Sweet Thunder, 1980) £30*

Buzzcocks *Spiral Scratch* EP (New Hormones, ORG 1, UK, 1977) **£75**
On the first punk-era independent label, these four stabs of minimalism (with that two-note guitar solo on Boredom) defined regional pride while already wondering if the movement was over: "the scene is very humdrum". Devoto's first and last sneer before opening Magazine; Shelley then found fresh romance in the short sharp pop song.
RRPG editor note: *First pressing of* Spiral Scratch *does not credit Howard Devoto on front sleeve (New Hormones ORG 1) £75*

Cheap Trick *In Color* (Epic SEPC 82214, LP, UK, 1977) **£12**
The Illinois quartet's second album honed the power pop sensibilities of their eponymous debut from earlier in '77. A slicker production benefited the band's soon-to-be-signature tune I Want You To Want Me and rockers Hello There and Clock Strikes Ten, although all became more familiar hits on the following year's *At Budokan* live release.
RRPG editor note: The Latest *LP from 2009 (Cheap Trick Unlimited CTU 2009) worth £200*

Chrome *Alien Soundtracks* (Siren DE 21 22, LP, US, 1977) **£200**
A Cali outfit led by Damon Edge (drums, effects) and Helios Creed (guitar), this second LP fused together Stooges bludgeon, psychedelia, all manner of studio trickery and hardcore science fiction lyricism to serve up a lo-fi classic on Edge's own label. Seminal. *Half Machine Lip Moves* (1979) was even better.
RRPG editor note: The Visitation *(stencilled sleeve, Siren DE 1000, 1976) £400*

Chic *Chic* (Atlantic, SD 19153, LP, US, 1977) **£20**
With the naff, soft porny cover of their debut, Chic might have been dismissed as ephemera, likely to evaporate once the disco craze passed. But with Dance, Dance, Dance and Everybody Dance, Bernard Edwards and Nile Rogers were founding the coming funk, as David Bowie would shrewdly recognise.
RRPG editor note: *Sadly, Everybody Dance was not released as a 12" in the UK, to allow the full flow of the album version.*

The Clash *The Clash* (CBS 82000, LP, UK, 1977) **£50**
Fanfaring the group's debut provides protest punk with its blueprint; the short, sharp shock of White Riot, Career Opportunities and London's Burning still resonating today. Also includes their tuned-in cover of Junior Murvin's Police And Thieves.
RRPG editor note: *The* Capital Radio *EP was an* NME *freebie (CBS CL 1) £150*

Leonard Cohen *Death Of A Ladies' Man* (Columbia CBS 86042, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
The king of subdued introspection meets the lord of kitchen-sink walls of sound as both battle commercial decline. What could possibly go wrong? Apart from heavy drinking, cocked guns and the producer running off with the masters? Somehow, Cohen's most atypical album reels with highly unorthodox, frazzled charm.
RRPG editor note: *Memories/Don't Go Home With Your Hard On (CBS 5882) £6*

The Congos *Heart Of The Congos* (Black Art, no cat no, LP, Jamaica, 1977) **£400**
One of the, if not *the,* best roots reggae recording(s) ever made, The Congos plus Lee Perry plus crack studio band equals genius here. Tracks such as Fisherman, Congoman and Children Crying are precious deep cuts, full of soulful yearning and spiritual calling.
RRPG editor note: *Released in UK in 1980 (Go-Feet BEAT 2) £40*

Elvis Costello *My Aim Is True* (Stiff SEEZ 3, LP, UK, 1977) **£30**
The former Declan MacManus's articulate calling card, recorded in fits and starts during time off from his day job as a computer programmer. Distinguished by tales of soured romance (Alison, Red Shoes) and ripped-from-the-headlines ruminations on various political and social landscapes (Less Than Zero, Waiting For The End Of The World).
RRPG editor note: *Promo copies with "Help us hype Elvis" insert £150*

Culture *Two Sevens Clash* (Joe Gibbs Record Globe no cat no, LP, JA, 1977) **£40**
Exemplary debut from the reggae harmony group led by Joseph Hill, which yielded the title track, a single warning of Marcus Garvey's ominous divinations when the two sevens clashed. The song's impact was so huge that on 7/7/77, the whole of Kingston went into hiding just in case.
RRPG editor note: *Massive seller on import led to 1978 issue (Lightning LIP 1) £25*

The Damned *Damned Damned Damned* (Stiff Records SEEZ 1, LP, UK, 1977) **£77**
Incendiary first album from the classic Damned line-up which, produced by Nick Lowe, takes MC5 and Stooges influences and makes of them something their own, borne out by the machine gun etiquette of New Rose, Neat Neat Neat and Fan Club. Second album, the Nick Mason-produced *Music For Pleasure,* followed in November '77.
RRPG editor note: *Copies with Eddie & The Hot Rods photo on rear £400*

Ian Dury *New Boots And Panties!!* (Stiff SEEZ4, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
A dizzying compendium of pub rock, music hall, social portraiture and taut jazz shapes (from the thus far unnamed Blockheads) heralded Dury's arrival as a major talent. Highlights include the nudge-nudge bedroom shenanigans of Wake Up And Make Love To Me and its maker's imagery-laden tribute to a personal hero, Sweet Gene Vincent.
RRPG editor note: *Rare solid centre version of Sweet Gene Vincent (BUY 23) £30*

Earth, Wind & Fire *All'n'All* (Columbia JC 34095, LP, US, 1977) **£5**
This was EWF's eighth album, but *All'n'All* cut back on the jazz, getting crisp and tight and dancefloor-friendly, sensing the way the times were turning. They reserved their sense of excess for the stage and their crazed Egyptological sleeves – on disc, with the likes of Fantasy, they were all about the groove.
RRPG editor note: *Eponymous 1971 debut LP (Warners WS 1905) £35*

CLASS OF '77

Rick Wakeman, Yes

After rejoining Yes this was the year you not only had a No 1 album with *Going For The One* but also a Top 10 single with Wondrous Stories. Had 1977 started with you huddling together for warmth in a difficult time?
Good god, no! I knew being near the top of the tree was coming to an end, but that was no reason not to continue making music. It's the great love of my life. As long as I could make a living making the music I loved, then I would continue – although it wasn't easy to begin with. Income dwindled to almost nothing overnight.

Were you shocked by the changes?
The music scene is always changing. New generations were coming of age and with that came a desire for their own music. It's always been a natural progression. It doesn't mean that other genres disappear, they just find their place in the musical league table. I always knew that things would change to the extent that we were very much out of favour, and why not? We had been a major element in the demise of the pop groups, and they had been a major factor in the demise of the crooner. The evoluion continues to this day.

Could you have foreseen your musical survival?
I never thought we could see off the new generation. I always understood that music was the first thing any teenager owned for themselves. Music was theirs and they didn't want their parents' music.

Do you think that the newer artists were valuable in giving established stars the incentive to move on?
Certainly, it made musicians and bands sit up and take notice and realise that things were changing, and that was a very healthy thing. It perhaps cleared out those that weren't really up to it.

Did you like the new music?
I really liked American punk over what was happening in the UK. I'm proud to this day of taking The Tubes to A&M Records – Fee Waybill was way ahead of his time.

What is your enduring memory of 1977?
For the first time in my life, technology was ahead of the musician, and I remember how it took over the making of music for no other reason than it was available.
Nick Dalton

CLASS OF '77

Elkie Brooks

How was 1977 for you?
It was great. I had served a long apprenticeship. I'd been in the industry since I was 15 back in 1960. I'd supported The Beatles, introduced the Small Faces, sat in with Georgie Fame, been in Dada and Vinegar Joe and then recorded my solo album, [1975's] *Rich Man's Woman,* and then suddenly here I was in the '77 chart with a hit album and hit singles.

The hit album was *Two Days Away*, produced by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller.
Which was a huge thing to get to work with them. Mike Stoller was a marvellous musician and Jerry Leiber wrote incredible lyrics. I think they thought I was just making the tea, but I was taking in everything, the way they worked, I learned an awful lot from them. And from the keyboardist Jean Roussel, an incredible player.

The hit singles were Pearl's A Singer, originally by Dino and Sembello and your first Top 10 hit, and The Sunshine After The Rain written by Ellie Greenwich.
I was rehearsing for the album and Jerry Leiber said, "Elkie, you got to hear this song" and I said, "OK." He said, "I know you don't like country music, but you've got such an open mind you'll like this." So, he played it and I said, "Jerry, this is wonderful, but it needs a middle section" and he said, "Don't worry, honey I'm gonna write one right now."

What was your favourite record of '77?
The Jacksons' Show You The Way To Go, that was very big for me in 1977. It was written by Gamble and Huff and got to No 1.

And who was your 1977 hero?
Diana Ross. I went to see her at the Victoria Palace Theatre in London, and I was completely blown away by her. She performed with an orchestra and backing singers and even though she only had these tiny speakers the sound was immense.

At the end of the show, I went to the sound man to shake his hand. It was Trevor Jordan, and I got my manager to book him for my forthcoming tour. I'd just split from my husband and soon after got with Trevor, and we're still together all these years after.
Lois Wilson

Electric Light Orchestra *Out Of The Blue* (Jet, CBS Jet DP 400, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
Another sign that '77 was about more than "just" punk and disco, this 70-minute double album from the mind of Jeff Lynne offered prog-pop; a Beatles-influenced, string-driven set rich in madly catchy singles such as Sweet Talking Woman, Wild West Hero and Mr Blue Sky. Went multi-platinum upon release.
RRPG editor note: *Blue vinyl edition from 1978 £40*

Brian Eno *Before And After Science* (Polydor 2302071, LP, UK, 1977) **£35**
If Roxy alumnus Eno's fifth solo album was his last "rock" record before going full "ambient" (it's leaning there already), he went out with a strain of ghostly glam, utilising Robert Wyatt, Phil Manzanera and Jaki Liebezeit in an eerie fusion of energy and ennui. (King's Lead Hat was an anagram of Talking Heads).
RRPG editor note: *Initial pressing with four Peter Schmidt prints £80*

Fleetwood Mac *Rumours* (Warners K 56344, LP, UK, 1977) **£35**
There had been hints, on their self-titled 1975 album, that the Mac, with Nicks and McVie in full vocal flight, might actually be a pop juggernaut. Nobody, however, least of all the relationship-ripping, drug-guzzling band, realised *Rumours* would become the Taj Mahal of West Coast soft rock. A monster-selling gamechanger.
RRPG editor note: *Limited edition on white vinyl from same year £40*

Foreigner *Foreigner* (Atlantic K 50356, LP, UK, 1977) **£8**
The turning point for heavy(ish) rock, when guitar heroes started combing their hair for a respectable rather than rebel audience. The transatlantic combo's debut sold five million in the States and the single, Cold As Ice, went global. Styx's *The Grand Illusion* and Kansas's *Point Of Know Return* propelled them into the same league.
RRPG editor note: *7" of Cold As Ice (K 10986) worth a whopping £2.*

Peter Gabriel *Peter Gabriel* (Charisma CDS 4019, LP, UK, 1977) **£10**
After leaving Genesis, Gabriel wanted to, as producer Bob Ezrin observed, "let all his different personalities out". Solsbury Hill proved he'd worked out which connection to cut when his life was in a rut, while Here Comes The Flood showcased improved songwriting skills. His scattergun approach suited the year.
RRPG editor note: *Withdrawn naked label Modern Love (CB 302) 7" from same year worth £30*

Grateful Dead *Terrapin Station* (Arista SPARTY 106, LP, UK, 1977) **£18**
Tellingly, producer Keith Olsen had previous with Fleetwood Mac by the time he entered the studio with the Dead. Quite literally nailing the door shut behind him, no one was getting out without a radio-friendly hit. The result was a transatlantic Top 30 album largely made up of MOR grooves, plus the lengthy Terrapin Station Medley. Spread across the whole of Side Two, the latter jumped the tracks to traverse more satisfyingly excursive territory.
RRPG editor note: *Mail-order copies of Dark Star 7" (SAM 79, 1977) £40*

Al Green *The Belle Album* (Hi/Pye HLP 6004, LP, UK, 1977) **£8**
Surely Al Green couldn't triumph without Willie Mitchell and the Hi Rhythm Section? God moves in mysterious ways, and he certainly found the feel on this supreme blend of groove and guile, with Green playing guitar himself. His penultimate secular album for many years, it redefined beauty.
RRPG editor note: *Withdrawn blue portrait edition of 1972's* Green Is Blues *(USA HI 32055) £80*

The Heartbreakers *L.A.M.F.* (Track Record 2409 218, LP, UK, 1977) **£35**
No one expected The Heartbreakers' debut album to be a slick affair. However, thanks to a mix created piecemeal by band members either side of drug sorties, their sleaze-rock swagger wasn't always at full strut. That is, until Johnny Thunders oversaw a 1984 remix and its innate character burst from the speakers 'Like A Mother Fucker'.
RRPG editor note: *Withdrawn It's Not Enough/Let Go (2094 142) £250*

Richard Hell & The Voidoids *Blank Generation* (Sire 9103327, LP, UK, 1977) **£40**
Having blazed through Television and the Heartbreakers, Hell formed The Voidoids, named after a novel he was writing. *Plastic Letters* producer Richard Gottehrer oversaw jagged, pugnacious riffs (Robert Quine's guitar stars) and poetic angst delivered with nasal conviction. That title song defined the New York punk scene.
RRPG editor note: *Blank Generation 7" (6078 608) a bargain at £8. Did not come with a p/s.*

Millie Jackson *Feelin' Bitchy* (Spring SP 1 6715, LP, US, 1977) **£8**
Potty-mouthed Jackson pushes decency boundaries with seventh album of pithy southern soul, ranging from her emotion-capsizing cover of Merle Haggard's If You're Not Back In Love By Monday – a US R&B Top 5 hit – to the punchy funk of George Jackson's Lovin' Your Good Thing Away.
RRPG editor note: *Northern soul tune A House For Sale/There You Are (Spring 2066 713, 1976) £40*

The Jam *In The City* (Polydor 2383 447, LP, UK, 1977) **£25**
Their Chris Parry-produced, punky debut captures their thrilling live set in the studio with a mix of energised covers of Larry Williams et al and originals celebrating youth (title track) and critiquing society (Bricks And Mortar). Hastily conceived follow-up *This Is The Modern World* (also '77) wasn't quite as good but Life From A Window showed songwriting maturity.
RRPG editor note: This Is The Modern World *LP (2383 475) £25*

Jethro Tull *Songs From The Wood* (Chrysalis CHR 1132, LP, UK, 1977) **£12**
In which Ian Anderson and co – the former now relocated to the country – took an enticing diversion into the trees as the folk influences that were always there took centre-stage. Bucolic instrumentation decorates tidy, pagan-themed tunes, resulting in a welcome return to form for the prog mavericks.
RRPG editor note: *The Whistler/Strip Cartoon (in p/s, CHS 2135, 1977) £25*

Billy Joel *The Stranger* (CBS CBS 82311, LP, UK, 1977) **£12**
Sharing a label with fellow eloquent observers of the American condition Dylan, Simon and Springsteen, Joel's major breakthrough fifth release became, for a brief period, CBS's all-time biggest seller, courtesy of lush balladry (Just The Way You Are) and evocative blue-collar poetry (Movin' Out, Scenes From An Italian Restaurant).
RRPG editor note: *Ballad Of Billy The Kid UK single (Philips 6078 018, 1974) £35*

Judas Priest *Sin After Sin* (CBS CBS 82008, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
Priest's third album saw them step up from the limitations of the Gull label. A deceptively powerful beast, which still maintained the subtleties and melodies that would keep them ahead of the pack, *Sin After Sin* was the right album at the right time and the first step in the band's prominence in the 80s metal scene.
RRPG editor note: *Debut album* Rocka Rolla *(Gull GULP 1005, 1974) £60*

CLASS OF '77

Martin Rev, Suicide

How was 1977 for you?
It was a pretty productive year. We brought out our first full recording [Suicide's eponymous debut album].

You'd been going for quite some time before that record, right?
We started around '71, so six years. By then things had opened up a lot and we were regularly playing Max's Kansas City and CBGBs thanks to [impresario] Peter Crowley, who was spearheading a whole movement in New York. We had a track on the jukebox in Max's a little before that, but '77 was the first full album on Red Star.

Now electronic music is everywhere, but nobody was using just a rhythm box and a Farfisa organ at that time...
Well, it's what people have said, but it was only as important as the fact it was the sound I wanted to make. Whether it was ahead or behind – it was a little too early. I felt electronics were an entirely new frontier at that time. It was an exciting journey and I felt it was the future in many respects.

Did Kraftwerk mean anything to you?
Not so much in '77. But then I heard this story about how Kraftwerk came to New York, and they went to [journalist] Lester Bangs' place; they wanted him to play them something they'd never heard so he played them Suicide. And they flipped out so badly that they needed to have a copy— *his* copy. That story was told to me by [Suicide frontman] Alan Vega.

Did you feel an affinity with groups you were playing with at that time?
There was definitely an affinity with The Clash because they invited us on a tour. The Cramps, too, because they were on the same stage as us. But where the music was concerned not so much. Nobody else was using electronics as the sole sound source so we were subverting the entire tradition. I felt more of a connection with DJs, and, later on, with rap and hip hop.

You were playing with The Clash when somebody threw an axe, weren't you?
It was Glasgow, actually. Alan noticed it going over. There was so much energy from the punks in all their regalia and they were 11 or 12 years old! A lot of coins were thrown, too. If you scooped up all the money in front of the drums you could make a nice fortune every night.
Jeremy Allen

CLASS OF '77

Chris Frantz, Talking Heads

How was 1977 for you?
It was an amazing time. We signed our contract with Sire in late '76, after playing together for a couple of years but not feeling we were ready to make a record, and then things moved really fast. We were still working on the first album [*Talking Heads: 77*] when the Ramones invited us to join them on their European tour, and I still think it's one of the best rock'n'roll tours of all time. The Saints were on the bill, too.

Did touring the UK open your eyes to different musical climates?
We'd read a lot about the UK punk scene in the British music press, but I remember being struck by how much attention bands paid to style and their image, something we weren't really doing ourselves. On a night off we saw The Clash, The Jam and The Slits in Brighton, and they all seemed to have their own photographers like Pennie Smith and Jill Furmanovsky capturing their every move for posterity! Musically, The Clash and The Slits were incorporating reggae elements into their sound, and I guess hearing those explorations of different rhythms fed into what we would do later.

Was anything specific that happened in '77 especially significant for the band?
Well, learning to how better put across our sound on the live stage during those European shows improved our methods of working when we returned to the States to finish off our album; it made us think more about what we were doing and how we wanted to be perceived. On a more personal level, once the record was finished myself and Tina [Weymouth, bassist] went down to Kentucky where I'm from, and got married. We're still together 45 years later, so that was kinda significant!

What was your favourite record of 1977?
I guess I'd have to say the Ramones' *Leave Home*, if that's not too close to home or predictable.

And who was your 1977 hero?
My teacher from art school in the US arranged for us to meet Peter Blake in London, and he took us to lunch and brought Ian Dury along. We'd not heard any of his music at that point, but everything about the man made a lasting impression on us. *New Boots And Panties!!* was a fantastic record – great songs and a great band – and Ian is one of the most charismatic people I've ever met.
Terry Staunton

Evelyn 'Champagne' King Shame (RCA, PC 1122, 12", UK, 1977) **£3**
Never a major chart hit, overshadowed by Chic and other disco deities, Shame nonetheless was dancefloor royalty for years to come, thanks to the Al Garrison-David Todd remix. Bronx-Born King, still a teenager, sang with preternatural fluidity over a smooth, insidious groove flavoured by Sam Peake's seductive saxophone. (Slow) burning.
RRPG editor note: *First Stateside pressing of her 1977 debut LP (RCA Victor 12466) is worth £25*

Kraftwerk *Trans Europe Express* (Capitol, E ST, 11603, LP, UK, 1977) **£30**
Kraftwerk's paean to Europe past and present, to the interconnection of its rail service, is their retro-futurist masterpiece. The title track is as perfect a sonic evocation of a train journey as Autobahn was one by car. Here, they laid down the tracks for the decades to come.
RRPG editor note: *First three albums still worth, in various forms, from £50 to £400, due to non-reissue for four decades.*

Fela Anikulapo Kuti & The Afrika 70 *No Agreement* (Afrodisia DWAPS 2039, LP, Nigeria, 1977) **£100**
An oft-overlooked but undeniable career best that captures Fela in "by any means necessary" mood, attacking Nigeria's military regime; its two tracks, No Agreement and Dog Eat Dog, are both 15-minute avant-afrofunk pieces, the latter an instrumental featuring Lester Bowie on trumpet.
RRPG editor note: Zombie *(UK Creole CRLP 511, 1977) £40*

Lynyrd Skynyrd *Street Survivors* (MCA MCG 3525, LP 1977) **£15**
Revitalised by prodigiously talented new guitarist Steve Gaines, Skynyrd never sounded more rambunctious than on What's Your Name, nor more arresting than on That Smell. Three days after release came the tragic plane crash, prompting withdrawal of the original album cover, depicting the band surrounded by flames (restored on reissues).
RRPG editor note: *Withdrawn first US pressing (MCA 3029) with flames around band, worth £200*

Bob Marley & The Wailers *Exodus* (Island ILPS 9498, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
His tour de force, a potent mix of religious prophecy, social protest and love songs written and recorded in London in the wake of an assassination attempt at his home in Jamaica. The track listing reads like a Greatest Hits: Waiting In Vain, Three Little Birds, One Love/ People Get Ready and the title track.
RRPG editor note: *Check out the Exodus promo 7" that includes Marley talking up the LP (WIP 6402 DJ) £30*

Meat Loaf *Bat Out Of Hell* (Epic EPC 82419, LP, UK, 1977) **£10**
Jim Steinman's songs and Meat Loaf's equally over-the-top persona and voice took a while to get out of the traps, but once they'd blagged a release (with the help of producer Todd Rundgren) these grandiose tales of lust and danger raced to absurd sales figures. *Born To Run* directed by Peter Jackson.
RRPG editor note: *Withdrawn first UK 7" Clap Your Hands, Stamp Your Feet (ODE ODS 66304, 1975) £25*

Joni Mitchell *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* (Asylum K 463003, LP, UK, 1977) **£8**
Further delving into the jazz fusion terrain of *Hejira*, with four members of Weather Report, this double album alienated Joni's pop audience, as experiments like the 16-minute, part-improvised Paprika Plains fell midway between spontaneous creativity and loose indulgence. With hindsight, it's inspired – and Bjork's favourite album.
RRPG editor note: *Eponymous UK debut (Reprise RSLP 6293, 1968) £50*

Motörhead ***Motörhead*** (Chiswick WIK 2, LP, UK, 1977) **£750**
Offered a weekend studio session to record a single, Motörhead's classic line-up of Lemmy, Phil Taylor and Eddie Clarke, fortified by chemical refreshments, cut eight tracks of red-raw, synchronised clobbering. They'd write stronger songs later, but this ferocious opening shot won them the admiration of punks and metalheads alike.
RRPG editor note: *Above price for limited silver/black sleeve. Common black/white £50*

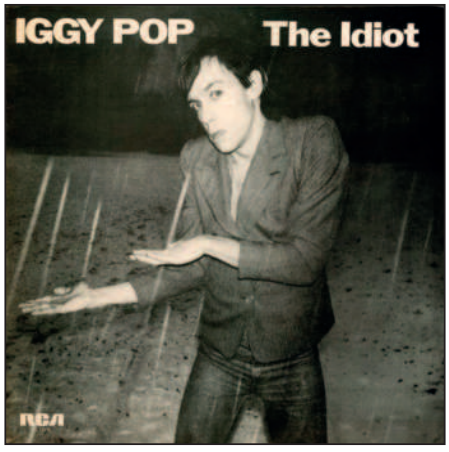
Junior Murvin ***Police & Thieves*** (Island ILPS 9499, LP, UK, 1977) **£35**
Produced by Lee Perry in his Black Ark studio and utilising a crack band including Boris Gardiner, Ernest Ranglin and Sly Dunbar, Murvin sets the bar on roots reggae impossibly high, delivering his socially conscious lyrics on the title track, later covered by The Clash.
RRPG editor note: *Chattie Chattie/The Magic Touch (Big Shot BI 503, 1968) £300*

Randy Newman ***Little Criminals*** (Warners K 56404, LP, UK, 1977) **£5**
A powerful collection of fresh vignettes from one of America's sharpest social commentators, led by the controversial satire of bigotry on surprise hit single Short People. More serious concerns engage Newman on hard-hitting chronicles of urban decline (Baltimore) and chilling reminiscences of the past (In Germany Before The War).
RRPG Editor note: *Hi Fi News Nimbus supercut of* Little Criminals *(1985) £70*

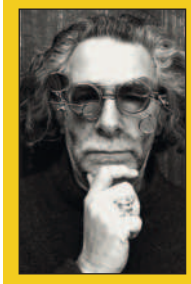
Parliament ***Funkentelechy Vs The Placebo Syndrome*** (Casablanca CALH 2021, LP, UK, 1977) **£35**
This sixth album from the P-Funk gang is both conceptual and creative genius with single Flashlight, built around Bernie Worrell's trailblazing synth bassline, hitting the US R&B No 1 spot. Other highlights: Sir Nose D'Voidoffunk's vocoder insanity; the infectious Bop Gun (Endangered Species).
RRPG editor note: *Hard to find, especially with original booklet and poster inserts*

Penetration Don't Dictate (Virgin VS192, 7", UK, 1977) **£15**
Inaugural single from the Ferryhill, North Durham punk band, a towering statement of seditionary and personal agency, centred around lead singer Pauline Murray's powerhouse vocal and searing delivery. Don't Dictate remains one of rock music's most affecting anthems.
RRPG editor note: *Debut LP,* Moving Targets *(1978 V 2109), a bargain at £20*

Pink Floyd ***Animals*** (Harvest SHVL 815, LP, UK, 1977) **£100**
Thought Floyd had gone soft after the wistful melancholia of *Wish You Were Here*? This follow-up thrust us back into bleak misanthropy. Bitterness bites, hooks are at a premium, yet Gilmour's guitar lines and Waters' insidious melodies slowly get under your skin and stay there.
RRPG editor note: Pink Floyd did not release any singles in the UK between 1968 and 1979



Iggy Pop ***The Idiot*** (RCA PL 12275, LP, UK, 1977) **£40**
Recorded prior to *Low*, the album which rebranded the struggling ex-Stooge as a subversive crooner allowed producer Bowie to test his new twists, while revealing Iggy to



CLASS OF '77

Kevin Godley, 10cc/ Godley & Creme

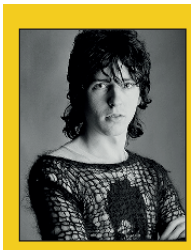
You've talked about emerging from your *Consequences* studio odyssey blinking into the new, cold light of punk. Was that album's refusal to adhere to convention actually very punk indeed?
We simply wanted to find out what the Gizmo [instrument] could do and where it might take us. We were open to anything but once it started to take shape and begin to feel 'grandiose', for want of a better word, the main elements coalesced as orchestra and sound design. Punk was angry and back to basics, so its audio / emotional template was a distance from ours, or felt like it.

What did you make of 1977 punk?
I loved the vibe of it all. Everything needs a kick in the balls now and then – including us. I was into XTC, Television, Ian Dury and such, but most of all, Elvis Costello. His songs were blazingly good..

Did you listen to 10cc's *Deceptive Bends* at the time, and what did you think of it? Are that album and *Consequences* diametric opposites, or could the Sara Vaughan team-up (Lost Weekend) or Cool, Cool, Cool have appeared on a 10cc album?
Not fully. An audio glance, probably – we were too full-on. What we did hear, though, was pretty much what we expected. A more straightforward album. Solid tunes, well-recorded, plus hits. In a nutshell, 10cc with the arty stuff removed!

***L* (1978) is a harder-hitting record, and recorded at Nigel Gray's Surrey Sound, home to The Police. Were you and Lol keen to fit in with the '77 zeitgeist?**
Not so much to fit in, more to lift us out of where we'd been. I was angry about our lack of foresight. Nigel used to play us Police tracks, and there was a directness about their approach that influenced our writing and recording during *L* to a degree. Factor in the disappointment with the *Consequences* critical mauling and there was a need to start again, hence the title.

Do you think 1977 was special?
It was a transitional year. We'd released 'The Big C', watched it flounder, but used some of side 1's instrumental music for a Benson & Hedges film commercial. We cut a deal to get the Gizmotron manufactured and started *L*. There was lots going on.
Sean Macreavy



CLASS OF '77

Tony James, Generation X

How was 1977 for you?
It was a great year for Generation X, with the first two singles getting released. That was something that we'd all dreamed of doing. We were playing gigs at The Roxy at the start of the year, and then we got signed quite quickly to Chrysalis. We did a residency at The Marquee as well, which was when it really felt like there was something in the air, that the tide was turning, and we were a part of an important movement.

What were the highlights?
Doing *Top Of The Pops* was a really special moment. We'd watched that for years and always wanted to be on it, so to finally get there was something that you never forget. We never thought about anything further than what we were doing the week after, so it would have seemed inconceivable that I'd be talking about it 45 years later.

What really turned the year around for you as a band?
Getting the record deal. We had a manager, but we didn't really understand the process. I was aware of thinking we needed a great manager; we were so naïve and unsavvy looking back. One thing that saved us from disaster was that when I was growing up, I used to babysit for Neil Aspinall, who was The Beatles' road manager. We were offered a deal, and I remember we went to see Neil at Apple Records to get his opinion, and he said never in a million years should we sign it.

What was your favourite single of '77?
I remember really enjoying everything that came out by the other punk bands. We were all very like-minded groups. It was like everything almost got defined by haircuts, but there was a clear change in the way that the bands looked. I was really friendly with so many of the bands, and there was so much great music coming out practically every week.

Your favourite albums of the year?
Rocket To Russia by Ramones was a favourite, and, of course, their first album had never been off anybody's turntable since it came out. They had the most seismic effect on the punk scene; everybody bar the Pistols doubled the speed of their songs. The other really big thing was the introduction of dub reggae onto the scene, which was down to Don Letts. Tapper Zukie became a big favourite of mine.
Mark McStea

be a visionary vessel, no mere passenger. Funtime continued on the orgasmic *Lust For Life* just six months later: here comes success.
RRPG editor note: *China Girl/Baby (PB 9093, 1977) was Iggy's first solo UK single £15*

Queen ***News Of The World*** (EMI EMA 784, LP, UK, 1977) **£40**
We Will Rock You signified that the amps were being turned up and the stakes raised, before We Are The Champions predicted world domination. That said, *NOTW* is still an eclectic set showcasing an enviable ability to cherry-pick styles from punk to funk to jazz and blues and fill them with arena-thrilling hooks.
RRPG editor note: *Box set promo copies with photos, badge and demo 7" worth £1,000*

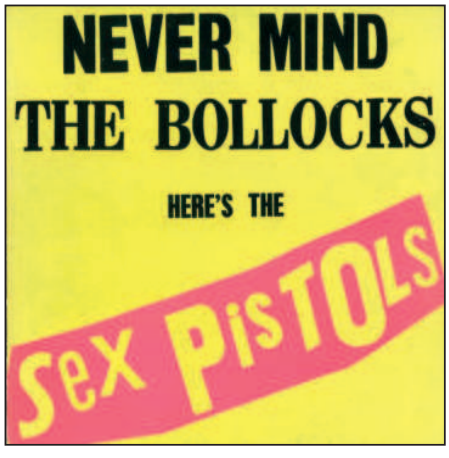
Ramones ***Leave Home*** (Sire 9103 254, LP, UK, 1977) **£40**
Finally able to afford a modest production budget, the fantastic four upgraded the gonzo rock sound of their trailblazing debut, sharpening their punk punches on this, their first of two 1977 LP releases (the slicker *Rocket To Russia* followed in November). They weren't fixing what wasn't broken, though: stomping anthems such as Commando and Pinhead doubled down on their idiot-savant schtick in style.
RRPG editor note: *Debut 1976 UK 7" Blitzkreig Bop/Havana Affair (6078 601) in rare p/s £200*

Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers ***Rock'N'Roll With The Modern Lovers*** (Beserkley BSERK 9, LP, UK, 1977) **£25**
Richman's twee surrealism still sounds bizarre, yet somehow Egyptian Reggae, an Earl Zero cover, infiltrated the UK Top 5. Confusion reigned as Dave Marsh wrote, "twerp", and Greil Marcus called this "the purest rock and roll this year". Nursery rhymes, lullabies and travelogues.
RRPG editor note: *Road Runner 1975 debut UK release (United Artists UP 36006) £7*

Rose Royce ***In Full Bloom*** (Whitfield K56394, LP, UK, 1977) **£6**
Norman Whitfield was still a powerhouse producer, and with Gwen Dickey bringing a caress of vocals, Rose Royce confirmed they had more to offer than Car Wash. Wishing On A Star lilted with longing, as did Ooh Boy, but the funk was fierce on the nine-minute Do Your Dance.
RRPG editor note: *Promo copies of Still In Love 12" (Epic US AS 1496, 1982) sell for £70*

Rush ***A Farewell To Kings*** (Mercury 9100 042, LP, UK, 1977) **£10**
Buoyed by the make-or-break success of the previous year's *2112*, the Canadian power-prog trio showed they could mix succinct immediacy with long-form exploration as hit single Closer To The Heart offered neat contrast with Xanadu's Coleridge-inspired exploration and Cygnus X-1's four-part sci-fi odyssey.
RRPG editor note: Hemispheres *(Mercury 9100 059, 1978) £30*

The Saints ***(I'm) Stranded*** (Harvest SHSP4065, LP, UK, 1977) **£40**
Chris Bailey and Ed Kuepper's Brisbane punks based themselves in the UK for the energy and aggression of their debut's title-track single. "A rip-snorter of an album," *RC* contributor Kris Needs declared in the pages of *ZigZag* magazine, evidenced by further hybrids of rage and ennui (Erotic Neurotic, No Time, Demolition Girl).
RRPG editor note: *Original 1976 Australian pressing of I'm Stranded/No Time (Fatal No Cat no) £1,000+*



Sex Pistols ***Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The*** (Virgin V2086, LP, UK, 1977) **£100**
After the swearing, hype, bans, record label switches and singles, could the album deliver? Well, not to some record shops,

who refused to stock it. Yet from the provocative intro of Holidays In The Sun, the definitive punk album defenestrated your reservations, Rotten's anti-voice snarling, Jones' guitars steamrollering. Anarchy in the EQ.
RRPG editor note: *UK 1977 variations of this classic album range in price from £25 to £1,000*

Shoes *Black Vinyl Shoes* (Black Vinyl S 51477, LP, US, 1977) **£100**
A home-made, self-released debut from this Illinois four-piece who created a hypnotic, twin-guitar, harmony-rich power pop. There's a near electro edge in the driving simplicity and echoing drumbeat. The record was picked up by hip label Sire although fully-fledged fame escaped them.
RRPG editor note: *Released in UK in 1979 (Sire SRK 6075) £20*

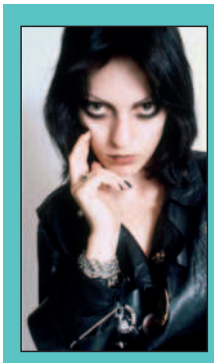
Space *Magic Fly* (Pye International, NSPL 28232, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
With a line-up that included Jannick Top, formerly of Magma, this helmeted trio lay down a marker for Eurodisco with their debut album, dominated by the title track, an international hit. It's a priceless 70s kitsch relic and a futurist signpost, pointing ahead to Daft Punk.
RRPG editor note: *So popular, the LP was even released in Russia (Melodia C60 19791 009) £12*

Steely Dan *Aja* (ABC ABCL 5225, LP, UK, 1977) **£8**
The mannered jazz-rock of Donald Fagen and Walter Becker and their elite squad of session players arguably reached its pinnacle on this Grammy-winning sixth release. The ever-increasing sophistication of their compositional structures and pristine production (by long-term collaborator Gary Katz) makes itself known on, especially, Deacon Blues, Peg, and Josie.
RRPG editor note: *Everything Must Go (Reprise 9362 48435 1, 2003) £100*

The Stranglers *Rattus Norvegicus* (United Artists UAG 30045, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
Existing in a field of one, The Stranglers defied punk orthodoxy: they could play, their sound was founded on organ and keyboards. Yet their debut, and 1977 follow-up *No More Heroes* five months later, shook with musical menace and lyrical controversy and captured the mood of the times perfectly.
RRPG editor note: *Early pressings with Choosey Susie/Paesan 7" worth £50*

Suicide *Suicide* (Red Star, RS 1, LP, US, 1977) **£150**
Harangued by punks when they played it live, Alan Vega and Martin Rev's Suicide was rock reduced to its minimal essence: vocals, electricity, and drone. The dark birthplace of the yin-yang 80s electropop/EBM (Soft Cell, Pet Shop Boys, Front 242). Frankie Teardrop was a thing of unmatched, terrifying brilliance.
RRPG editor note: *Released in the UK in early 1978 (Red Star/Bronze BRON 508) £60*

Donna Summer *I Remember Yesterday* (Casablanca NBLP 7056, LP, US, 1977) **£10**
With a sequencer sound also expounded on his (1977) album *From Here To Eternity*, Giorgio Moroder's claim, among many competing ones in 1977, to be the architect of the pop future, is the strongest. This ironically nostalgic concept album (the same



CLASS OF '77

Gaye Advert, The Adverts

How was 1977 for you?
We went from going to watch bands at the Roxy to playing live at the Roxy. We also went on tour with Iggy Pop. Iggy was my hero. I discovered him through The Stooges' Raw Power which I heard off my flatmate Dave at art college in Torquay. Supporting him was amazing. We got to play then see Iggy perform and then hang out a bit. At one point he asked whether I wanted to travel in their coach as it was bigger than our mini bus and I said, I better not [laughs]. There were so many great bands that year, all just starting out, all really enthusiastic, all like us. It felt like something was really starting to happen and that anything might be possible.

How did you sign to Stiff that year?
Brian James from The Damned, who were signed to Stiff, had a word with [label boss] Jake Riviera. He came down and saw us at the Roxy and we put out our debut single, One Chord Wonders, on it. We had originally been called that for a while. TV Smith [vocals, guitar] wrote it. It was autobiographical.

You did two John Peel sessions in 1977. Was that a big deal?
Definitely. I used to listen to his radio show, and it was a real achievement to get a session. While we were doing the first one Suzi Quatro was in the next room and I went in to borrow something off her. Meeting her was cool. She had attitude.

What are your memories of performing second single Gary Gilmore's Eyes on *Top Of The Pops*?
It was my 21st birthday. My dad sent me a telegram. It meant a lot to him, he was very proud. So it was a milestone of sorts but I stood in the wrong place and there was no, What shall I wear? I just wore what I wore the day before – I wore the same clothes all the time. I only had two black T-shirts and a pair of black jeans, and then later I got a pair of vinyl trousers. We were quite lucky with the lineup on the day as Thin Lizzy, Eddie And The Hot Rods and Boomtown Rats were also on.

What are your favourite single and album from 1977?
Sonic Reducer by Dead Boys or Pretty Vacant by the Pistols. The album has to be Iggy's *Lust For Life*. I still play it now.
Lois Wilson

CLASS OF '77

Steve Diggle, Buzzcocks

How was 1977 for you?
It started off brilliantly for us because we released *Spiral Scratch*. We were all working on getting it into the shops, because we'd released it ourselves. After a few months, Geoff Travis at Rough Trade took over the distribution. We got brilliant reviews for it; people really got it. It was like the whole world came alive in 1977. It was a whole change in lyrical ideas, singing about boredom and all that.

What really turned the year around for you as a band?
The interest generated by *Spiral Scratch*. We also recorded the songs for the *Live At The Roxy* album in April and we were courting a lot of record companies by then. We had six of the majors sniffing around, offering us silly money. We signed with United Artists, because Andrew Lauder had been to a lot of our gigs, and he seemed to get the band. We could have signed to CBS for a lot more money, but we thought, "Fuck, The Clash are complaining about them already" [Laughs].

The first single, Orgasm Addict, got banned by the BBC. Were you surprised?
We were just doing what we wanted to do. It wasn't discussed with the record company because they said we had complete artistic control. It never crossed our minds; we thought everybody knew what an orgasm addict was. Everybody's had a wank at some time in their life. It's about as universal as anything you could put in a song. The pressing plant wouldn't even work on it at first as they thought it must be pornography.

What was your favourite record of '77?
There were so many great records released that year – there was electricity in the air. I'd definitely say the first Clash, Sex Pistols and Jam albums. We were all in it together. People from the outside might have thought there was a lot of rivalry, but everyone got along pretty well as I recall.

And who was your 1977 hero?
I think you'd have to give a big nod to John Peel. He played so many of the new bands first on his show, and we did quite a few sessions for him. The one we did in 1977 featured What Do I Get? long before it came out as a single. He was the most important supporter of the punk scene.
Mark McStea

year as Summer's brilliant double concept LP *Once Upon A Time*) culminates in the present and future: I Feel Love. We had lift-off.
RRPG editor note: *First UK 7" was Sally Go Round The Roses as Donna Gaines (MCA MK 5060, 1971) £50*

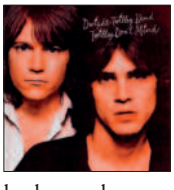
Supertramp *Even In The Quietest Moments...* (A&M AMLK 64634, LP, UK, 1977) **£10**
Just when many thought Supertramp had run out of steam, they scored their first US gold disc, with Give A Little Bit leading the FM radio play. An elegant, melodic, uncluttered album, it's the bridge between their proggier past and the snap-crackling pop of *Breakfast In America*.
RRPG editor note: *1984 Nimbus Supercut of* Breakfast In America *(AMLK 63708) £80*

Talking Heads *77* (Sire SR 6036, LP, UK, 1977) **£30**
77 marked American rock's transition into new wave – a tapered, mobile, intelligent, funk-inflected mode of music that left the vanguard of musicians who performed at The Band's *The Last Waltz* looking like dinosaurs. Psycho Killer was the stammering sound of tomorrow. The nerds were rising in full effect.
RRPG editor note: *As well as 7", Psycho Killer was an early UK 12" (6078 610) £12*

Television *Marquee Moon* (Elektra K 52046, LP, UK, 1977) **£50**
While others from the CBGB scene declared guitar solos dead, Verlaine and Lloyd showed they could still startle when deployed in fresh ways. Amid French Symbolism-inspired poetry, clinical rhythms and ironically strangulated vocals, those guitars soar like bruised angels on a masterpiece beloved by Joy Division, R.E.M., U2, Pixies and Sonic Youth.
RRPG editor note: *First pressing has quotation marks around Marquee Moon. No quotes equals £30*

10cc *Deceptive Bends* (Mercury 9102502, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
As Godley & Creme left to focus on debut mission and grand folly *Consequences* (also 1977), Stewart and Gouldman were determined to prove they weren't just "5cc". Fired up, they hit home runs, from pop hits Good Morning Judge and People In Love to the awe-inspiring art-prog suite, Feel The Benefit.
RRPG editor note: Mirror Mirror *comeback (1995 Avex AVEXLP) £100*

Throbbing Gristle *Second Annual Report* (Industrial IR 0002, LP, UK, 1977) **£250**
Throbbing Gristle's debut album saw conceptual art mutate into raw industrial electronics. Comprising mostly live, untitled recordings as well as studio tracks like Maggot Death, TG captured the grainy, toxic air of late 70s UK culture – a sense of decay but also the birth of the ugly/beautiful new.
RRPG editor note: *First pressing has hand-made sleeve 1978 Fetish repress on has 'lightning flash' sleeve £40*



Dwight Twilley Band *Twilley Don't Mind* (Shelter ISA 5015, LP, UK, 1977) **£4**
Twilley and band partner Phil Seymour had sung harmony on Tom Petty's American Girl so hopes were high of emulating his success. This sharp, bright album's glossy approach to power pop achieved critical acclaim but they fell through the cracks due to label upheaval.
RRPG editor note: *You can buy all his six UK singles for a tenner*

UFO ***Lights Out*** (Chrysalis CHR 1127, LP, UK 1977) **£20**
UFO's fourth album for Chrysalis and their first to feature the classic Mogg/Schenker/ Raymond/Way/ Parker line-up boasted a plethora of treats (Love To Love, Too Hot To Handle, and the title track, for starters) as well as a misguided cover of Love's Alone Again Or, a highly collectable 7", if not their finest moment.
RRPG editor note: *First two albums,* U.F.O. *(1970) and* U.F.O. 2 *(1972) worth £150 and £200*

Ultravox ***Ha!-Ha!-Ha!*** (Island, 25499 I, LP, UK, 1977) **£20**
With their second album, the John Foxx-led Ultravox moved away from the influence of Roxy Music which overshadowed their self-titled debut album, also released in 1977. They were now more informed by punk but also by an armoury of synthesisers, newly affordable and about to change pop forever.
RRPG editor note: Systems Of Romance *(1978) templated the UK European sound (ILPS 9555) £25*

Tom Waits ***Foreign Affairs*** (Asylum K 53068, LP, UK, 1977) **£30**
From its noirish album cover down, *Foreign Affairs* found Waits working hard to prop up his early barfly persona. Its lengthy, string-laden centrepiece, Potter's Field, may not have added much to the character sketches he'd already perfected, but Waits' bop prosody earned top billing on the Beat Generation fantasy Medley: Jack & Neal/ California, Here I Come, and he played the part of matinee-idol flirt to perfection on the Bette Midler duet I Never Talk To Strangers.
RRPG editor note: *Waits did not make it onto 7" in the UK until 1980 with Somewhere (K12347) £8*

Muddy Waters ***Hard Again*** (Blue Sky SKY 818513, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
Recorded over an intensive three days with producer, guitarist and lifelong fan Johnny Winter, the blues legend's high-profile comeback found him revisiting former glories (Mannish Boy, I Can't Be Satisfied) in the company of veteran contemporaries, pianist Pinetop Perkins and harmonica player James Cotton.
RRPG editor note: *The only artist in this list whose first UK single was a 78 – Walkin' Blues (Vogue V 2102, 1953) £80*

Weather Report ***Heavy Weather*** (CBS S 81775, LP, UK, 1977) **£15**
Formed in 1970 by ex-Miles Davis alumni Joe Zawinul (keyboards) and Wayne Shorter (saxophone), this seventh album showcased the amazing virtuosity of new bass player Jaco Pastorius. It became their bestselling LP on the back of the track Birdland, which ended up on 7" and became their calling card.
RRPG editor note: *Nimbus Supercut of* Mysterious Traveller *(80027, 1985) £60*

Deniece Williams **Free** (CBS S CBS 4978, 7", UK, 1976/77) **£5**
With Maurice White and Charles Stepney producing and the majority of EW&F behind her, Williams delivers the apotheosis in quiet storm which, culled from 1976's *This Is Niecy,* spent two weeks on the UK top spot in May '77. Follow-up album *Songbird,* meanwhile, yielded the sentimental That's What Friends Are For, a UK No 8.
RRPG editor note: *1976 US promo 12" of Free (Columbia 23 10513) £80*

CLASS OF '77

Mike Campbell, Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

How was 1977 for you?
Man, it was a great year for us. We put our first record out in the States in late '76 and it wasn't really doing much, but then we went over to England, opening for Nils Lofgren, and things really began to take off. The reaction to us from audiences and the British music press filtered back home and kick-started the band to the next level.

What were your impressions of the UK?
It was the year of punk, which, of course, we'd heard about, but I don't think any of us were prepared for the energy of the whole scene, especially behind The Clash and the Pistols – I'd never seen anything like it. It was the first time either Tom or I had been away from home for any period of length, but both of us already had a romantic connection to the UK, through our shared love of the music of earlier generations. We'd bonded over our passion for The Beatles, the Stones, The Zombies, The Kinks and The Hollies, and I'd say we took from all of those, especially on our first couple of albums.

Music press reports from the time suggest you routinely upstaged Nils on that tour. Is that how you remember it?
Well, the press always likes to exaggerate, but it's true we went down well everywhere we played. Nils was always very gracious towards us, and we have a lot of respect for him, there was never any friction or bad blood. We were a bad band to have opening, because we were just ruthless. We were practically willing to kill ourselves onstage to win an audience over.

What was your favourite record of 1977?
I really liked *Never Mind The Bollocks*, the songs were amazing. It tends to be a favourite among guitarists, I think, for how the producer Chris Thomas put the emphasis on what Steve Jones was doing.

And who was your 1977 hero?
At that time my heroes were mostly people from the previous decade that I was still digging: Van Morrison always meant a lot to me. I loved The Clash, but I don't think of them as heroes as much as I do guys who were older than me, who were like wiser big brothers.
Terry Staunton

CLASS OF '77

Brian James, The Damned

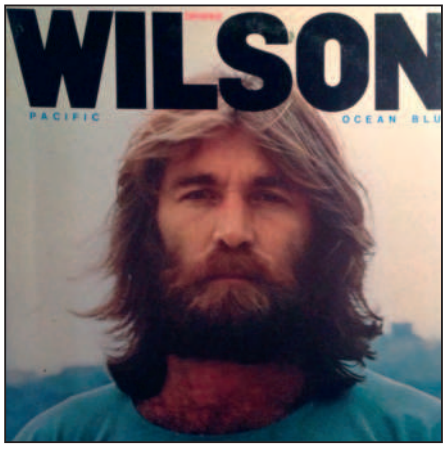
How was 1977 for you?
It was an amazing year. We were so busy, it was unbelievable. We released two albums and four singles, toured America, went on tour with T.Rex and split up. [Laughs]. We'd been doing next to nothing until we signed with Stiff the previous year, but everything went into overdrive in 1977.

What were the most significant moments for you?
The release of the first album was probably the most special memory. I remember how well it was received, unlike our second album at the end of the year. I understood why the reviews weren't as good, but that was because we didn't just want to remake the first album, but people didn't want us to change. I think it has stood up really well.

What are your memories of the tour with T.Rex?
I wasn't really a fan of T.Rex or glam, as I was living in Belgium when glam was big here, so I missed out on it. I knew they were huge, of course, and I expected him to be a bit of a bighead, but he couldn't have been nicer. He was such a friendly bloke. We were all on the same tour bus and he'd chat about anything for hours. It was so sad when he died, he had so much going for him. He was back in good health. I still remember him getting out and jogging in his green track suit when we stopped at the motorway services.

What was your favourite record of '77?
Our first album without a doubt. [Laughs]. It was so unique: the power, the songs, the speed that we played at. We'd had those songs for a while; some I'd written for my first band, Bastard, about three years earlier. I'd had the riff for New Rose since then.

Why did things fall apart at the end of the year?
We were on tour in Europe, just after we'd finished recording the second album, and Rat decided to leave. We had auditions, and we got Jon Moss in who went on to form Culture Club. He was a great drummer but not in the mould of Rat; things didn't feel the same anymore, so I thought it was time tomove on and play with other musicians.
Mark McStea



Dennis Wilson *Pacific Ocean Blue* (Caribou S CRB 81672, LP, UK, 1977) **£50**
A surprise challenger to Brian Wilson's status as The Beach Boys' finest songwriter, drummer Dennis Wilson worked for several years on this wide-ranging masterpiece, which flows from rolling gospel-rock (River Song) to moody after-hours set pieces (Friday Night) and dramatic balladry (Thoughts Of You). *Pacific Ocean Blue* plumbs emotional depths enough for several lifetimes.
RRPG editor note: *Sound Of Free 7" from 1970 (Stateside SS 2184) £80*

Wire *Pink Flag* (Harvest, SHSP 4076, LP, UK, 1977) **£50**
Signed by Harvest as an art-rock group, *Pink Flag* nevertheless is a masterly collection of terse gobbets of sensationalist punk facsimiles. Colin Newman's vocals drip with Lydon-esque ironic disdain, culminating in 12XU, with which they would tease their more lumpen fans by not playing it for years.
RRPG editor note: *Debut 7", Mannequin/Feeling Called Love/12XU (HAR 5144), in p/s £100*

Yes *Going For The One* (Atlantic K 50379, LP, UK, 1977) **£18**
Prog prevailing: as ELP endured in '77 with *The Works* (in two volumes) and Genesis consolidated with live double, *Seconds Out*, it was Yes who, perhaps surprisingly, returned from hiatus with a chart-topping, gold-selling, revitalised sound. With (mostly) shorter songs and Steve Howe on fire, these wondrous stories boasted a quickened energy.
RRPG editor note: *The album came out on three promo 12"s, worth £100*

And here are 5 more that almost qualify...

Blondie *Plastic Letters* (Chrysalis CHR 1166, LP, UK, 1977/78) **£20**
Though released in Japan in December '77, Blondie's second album hit most postboxes in February 1978. Retrospectively overshadowed by successor, *Parallel Lines*, it captured a rougher, punchier band than the slick pop act they became, while Denis breached the charts.
RRPG editor note: *X Unissued Offender/In The Sun (Private Stock PVT 90, 1976) £2,000*

Bootsy's Rubber Band *Ahh… The Name Is Bootsy, Baby!* (Warners K 56302, LP, UK, 1977) **£18**
Only squeezed out of the main list because he's in there with Parliament, Bootsy's second solo outing tears the roof off the sucker with infectious grooves throughout, although it's The Pinocchio Theory, all elastic thumping and scratch guitars, that provides the stand-out. It was also the catalyst for George Clinton's Sir Nose D'Voidoffunk creation.
RRPG editor note: *Only two Bootsy's Rubber band singles were released in the UK.*

Jackson Browne *Running On Empty* (Asylum 6 E 113, LP, US, 1977/78) **£8**
Capturing the road-weary mood of a rock generation ready to crash – if it hadn't already ➤

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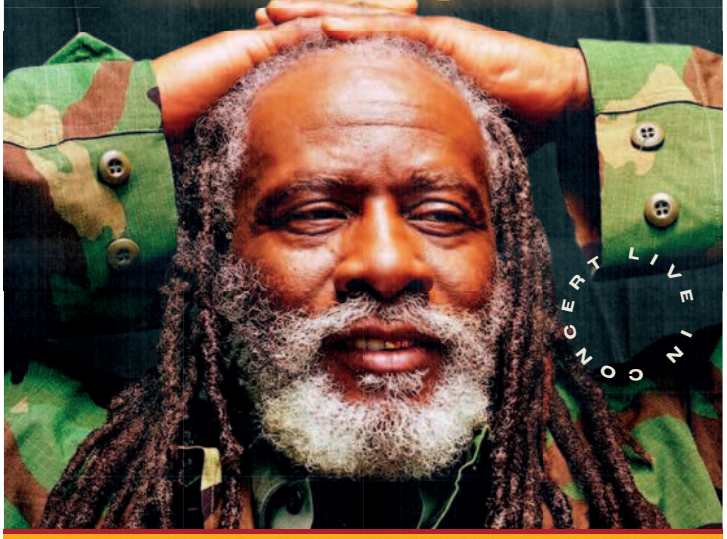

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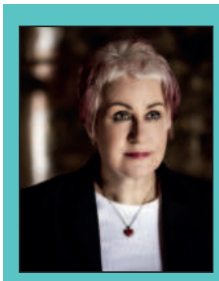

CLASS OF '77

Pauline Murray, Penetration

How was 1977 for you?
It was an amazing year and really the start of everything for Penetration. Punk was taking off and that was incredibly liberating, there was a feeling that the younger generation were taking control, doing things their way. I'd seen the Sex Pistols and The Clash in '76 and there was a sense anyone could do it, and all these bands were starting up that had never picked up an instrument, could barely play, had never written songs. This brand-new thing was forming out of nothing.

Tell me about Don't Dictate.
That was our punk statement. It was about saying be yourself, don't feel you have to change to fit in. It was an empowering time, and it captured those sentiments.

What are your memories supporting Generation X at the London Roxy?
We were based in Ferry Hill, a mining community miles away from London's hub, and the Roxy was like this mystical place to us. We hired a furniture van, it took us seven hours to get there, and it was this small, damp, dark basement. There was no PA and it was a bit of a dump but it was still special. We got onstage and Ari Up from The Slits shouted, "You are too stiff." Well, anyone would have been sat in a van for seven hours.

What was your favourite record of '77?
If it's 7"s then the Sex Pistols' God Save The Queen is the one. But there was also White Riot, Neat Neat Neat, Blank Generation, Orgasm Addict: the *Spiral Scratch* EP.

Then, in terms of albums, there was *Low, 'Heroes', Marquee Moon…* Iggy had a good year with *The Idiot, Kill City* and *Lust For Life*. Then there were also albums by The Clash, Damned, Kraftwerk, Elvis Costello, The Heartbreakers and, of course, *Never Mind The Bollocks*. It really was an amazing year for music.

Who was your 1977 hero?
Johnny Rotten, without a doubt. His attitude was so liberating and refreshing, the way he stood up to the establishment. He was very brave. Punk was a brave movement. It opened doors.
Lois Wilson

– *Running On Empty* was a disarmingly breezy-sounding collection of new songs recorded while on tour. Making a studio out of his bus and his hotel room, and packing amphitheatres nightly, Browne lifted the tattered scrim on a lifestyle of coffee mornings, cocaine afternoons and broken white lines leading into infinity.
RRPG editor note: *Despite storming the US, the LP was not released in the UK until 1978.*

Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers *Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers* (Shelter ISA 5014, LP, UK, 1976/77) **£20**
Although issued in Petty's native US in late '76, it was his debut's UK release the following February (in tandem with a headline-grabbing tour) that provided a substantial springboard to recognition and sales back home. The urgent power pop of American Girl led the charge, with the grit of Anything That's Rock'N'Roll and Breakdown not far behind.
RRPG editor note: *Wildflowers (Warners 9362 45791 1, 2004) worth a whopping £200*

XTC *White Music* (Virgin V 2095, LP, UK, 1978) **£20**
Recorded in '77, but not issued until the following January, XTC's debut road the coattails of punk but embellished them with more textured art-rock motifs. Andy Partridge's quirky humour is to the fore on This Is Pop and Statue Of Liberty, while a cover of Dylan's All Along The Watchtower respectfully nods to the past.
RRPG editor note: *Science Friction/She's So Square 7" (VS 188) in p/s £3,000*

HEAVEN'S ENDLESS

Here's 30-odd more '77 classics!

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Neil Young *American Stars 'N Bars*
Utopia *Ra* / *Oops! Wrong Planet*
Teddy Pendergrass *Teddy Pendergrass*
Burning Spear *Dry & Heavy*
War *Galaxy*
Alan Parsons Project *I Robot*
Heart *Little Queen*
Isley Brothers *Go For Your Guns*
Eric Clapton *Slowhand*
KISS *Love Gun*
Cluster & Eno *Cluster & Eno*
Styx *The Grand Illusion*
Hall & Oates *Beauty On A Backstreet*
The Jacksons *Goin' Places*
Alberto Y Los Trios Paranoias *Italians From Outer Space*
Sparks *Introducing Sparks*
John Otway & Wild Willy Barrett Really Free
Blue Öyster Cult *Spectres*
The Vibrators *Pure Mania*
Dead Boys *Young, Loud & Snotty*
Radio Birdman *Radios Appear*
The Dictators *Manifest Destiny*
Generation X Your Generation
Alessi Brothers Oh Lori
Eagles Hotel California
Carpenters Calling Occupants Of Interplanetary Craft

Entries written by: Nick Dalton, Rich Davenport, Jason Draper, Mark McStea, Chris Roberts, Johnny Sharp, Ian Shirley, Terry Staunton, David Stubbs, John Tucker, Lois Wilson.

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From The Vaults

Reissues, remasters and compilations

Still Crazy

Formative soft-rock near-classic, belatedly dominated by one song, adds demos. *By Chris Roberts*

Elton John

Madman Across The Water

★★★

UMC 3583613 (2CD/3CD/Blu-ray, LP/4LP)

There are people in their twenties now who sing along to Tiny Dancer with no idea that it was relatively unknown, even within the Elton canon, until the turn of the century. Overlong as a single, it didn't make much impact at the time of release. Only three decades later, in 2000, did its prominence in Cameron Crowe's film *Almost Famous*, a romanticised love letter to the 70s US rock scene, ensure that everybody, not just Kate Hudson and Billy Crudup, knew every word of every line.

Those are some curious words and lines. From its cheesy opening of "Blue jean baby, .A lady…", Tiny Dancer finds a simultaneously naïve and jaded Bernie Taupin attempting to capture the feel of life on the road. It fuses the wide-eyed innocence of the farm boy with the glee of a young man seeing all his wildest fantasies – about America, women and rock'n'roll – come true. He'd married Maxine Feibelman in April '71, and she was immortalised herein as "seamstress for the band". Her father was a champagne importer, so the wedding reception had been blessed by unlimited champers.

Bubbling through the muddled love lyrics of Tiny Dancer, however, are the other key themes of *Madman Across The Water*: the loneliness of this endless touring, and the thrill of it: the headlights on the highway. Bernie and Elton's obsession with Americana had already coloured 1970's *Tumbleweed Connection*, and the fact that the US was keener on the singer than the UK only consolidated their affection for the States' mythology. Whereas that previous studio album had still primarily engaged with Taupin's teenage fantasies about America, this documented what it was actually like to be stuck there, with fatigue as an albatross, the gloss shedding incrementally.

Technically, *Madman Across The Water*, released on Bonfire Night, was Elton's third album of 1971. The live set *17-11-70* had emerged in April, and the dreadful yet Grammy-nominated soundtrack album, *Friends,* in March. This, though, was the spiritual follow-up to *Tumbleweed Connection*. The title track had even been recorded for that album, with Mick Ronson wailing on guitar. The "re-recording" here, with Davey Johnstone, was more restrained, oddly. However, it perhaps sat better within the whole album, which generally simmers under Elton's over-the-top strangulated American accent and tinkling piano. So much tinkling. Gus Dudgeon's production is solid but risk-averse, a dash of gospel in the backing vocals, late on, the only camp flourish. Even Paul Buckmaster's strings seem subdued, by his standards. You've got session men like Rick Wakeman, Chris Spedding and Herbie Flowers chipping in – Dudgeon wasn't overly impressed by Elton's regular band – yet it all feels like it prefers strolling to sprinting.

That does give it a lazy, rumbling swing, even if it tamps down any charisma. Trident Studios engineer Ken Scott was at the time quietly settling in as producer on *Hunky Dory* and *Ziggy Stardust*, but wasn't allowed to unleash any moonage daydreams here.

The album's strengths lie in Elton's then insanely prolific, almost savant, gift for melody and irresistible chord changes. Much like Tiny Dancer, Levon is a splendid piece of construction, which as a vocalist Elton sells hard. (Tony Burrows' backing vocals help). Dudgeon claimed it was inspired by Levon Helm of The Band, though Taupin said that was nonsense. (He also denied *Madman Across The Water* was anything to do with Richard Nixon). Songs like Razor Face and Holiday Inn (another whine about the hard work of being a rock star) tread water; Rotten Peaches and All The Nasties find a second wind. Goodbye is a touching send-off.

Yet the other track aside from Tiny Dancer which found a 21st-century resurrection is Indian Sunset, which bizarrely was sampled in Ghetto Gospel, the Eminem-produced 2004 UK chart-topper from 2Pac "featuring Elton John". If 2Pac's posthumous hit was anti-racism, the original song is a slice of hasn't-aged-well redface, where Taupin imagines being a member of the Iroquois tribe, chucking in words like "teepee" and "tomahawk" and "squaw" with some historical inaccuracy. He had visited a Native American reservation, in fairness, but it feels like he spent most of his time in the gift shop. Nonetheless Elton, a grafter and a ham and a fine set of lungs, gives it his all, almost convincing us it works. Like the album, and like Elton's career at this stage, it had more emotional pull with Americans than with Brits. That course was modified in April '72 when Rocket Man came out in the same month as Starman, and Britain was invited to co-opt Elton to Glam.

This 50th-anniversary edition arrives – 51 years on – as a straightforward 1LP Bob Ludwig remaster, a 2CD set with rarities and demos, a 3CD & Blu-ray with book and memorabilia (and *…Whistle Test* performance), or a 4LP box set with intros from Elton and Bernie. Depending on your choice, you'll find tweaked permutations. In essence, the key Santa-drop here is a batch of Elton's solo piano demos – and who doesn't want to hear him belting out Tiny Dancer with full jazz hands to illustrate how big he wants it to sound with the band? Then there's the BBC *Sounds For Saturday* recordings (taped November '71), which – like most early 70s Elton live stuff – reminds us he was an earthy rocker before he was someone famous for being famous. Albeit a rocker with a knack for cooking up a plangent ballad, whether Bernie was penning gibberish or jewels that day.

That slow-burn, sleeper, near-freakish success of Tiny Dancer means *Madman…* is perceived through a different prism now than it was then. In '71, it was another passable huff and puff from a workaholic striver who was beginning to get traction, had new manager/boyfriend John Reid fighting his corner, and had only recently moved out of his mum's place. Now, it's the Tiny Dancer album, the rest of it a supporting cast. And after all these years, it still throws you that *that* chorus doesn't come in for ages. Half a century on, it's still all about deferred gratification.

Photo (Elton John): Ed Caraeff

Elton John and Bernie Taupin: "What do you *mean* people won't get into Tiny Dancer for another 30 years?"

Broad Church

Compiling the diverse ideas of the Pixies leader's other band. *By John Earls.*

Frank Black And The Catholics

The Complete Studio Albums

★★★★

Demon DEMRECBOX 68 (7LP)

Since Pixies reformed in 2004, the prolific workrate of Charles Thompson IV, switching from his original band's alias Black Francis to Frank Black, has been overlooked. There were three entertaining solo Frank Black albums from 1993-96, and then he got seriously busy. From 1998-2003, Black's band Frank Black And The Catholics specialised in recording to two-track, dashing off an average of an album a year (to compensate for Black scrapping 2000's *Sunday Sunny Mill Valley Groove Day* on the eve of its release, 2002 saw two Catholics albums).

In 2015, their albums were compiled in a CD box set with assorted extras. Seven years on, they're out on vinyl, minus the extras. It means three albums make their vinyl debut, including fourth record *Dog In The Sand* – the absolute pick of the Catholics' six LPs, a pitch-perfect mix of the surf-inflected cheeriness that frequently infiltrates Pixies' mania and the more straight-up classic rock The Catholics had honed from their start. A cult classic, *Dog In The Sand* is where it appeared Black was finally being recognised as a frontman and songwriter with more to him than Pixies. One mischievous song is titled Llana Del Rio. Perhaps Lizzy Grant was taking notes for her own alias.

Despite the basic recording techniques and ferocious productivity, there's far more going on here than bar-band primitivism. From their self-titled debut onwards, a devilish energy was the main common link. Black's vocals were more conversational than his old band, and his lyrics similarly unadorned. If you want to hear Thompson as seemingly straight-up singer and lyricist, head to 1999's *Pistolero*. Even there, the Catholics throw out garage rock, AOR, 50s rock & roll and alt. country among its 14 tracks.

Such a mix is broadly typical of a band determined not to overthink things. Sure, Heloise from 2002's *Devil's Workshop* might have become a fully-fledged powerful treasure with less scrappy guitars, but would it have maintained Black's fiery menace so gleefully? Moreover, it's preceded by Are You Headed My Way, a brilliant slice of early rock'n'roll where that second recording track might just be a little too much. The tracklisting on the debut album is in alphabetical order to save thinking about sequencing, typifying a band who appear to want to get their ideas down quickly because there are so damn many of them they want people to hear.

By the relatively normal country-rock flavours in final album *Show Me Your Tears*, there was a sense that even Frank Black And The Catholics needed a break to recharge themselves. It's been 19 years now. With a new Pixies album due two months after this competently assembled box (a booklet with sleevenotes by producer Ben Mumphrey and Steve Gullick's enigmatic photos is the only addition), maybe Thompson will find a way to have two bands happily co-existing. It's Black avoiding demoitis and realising the first idea is often best. They wouldn't need long to get a comeback album recorded, either.

Frank Black And The Catholics: "Oh God," his bandmates thought, "not another sermon"

Q&A

Frank Black on his part in online music history and the possibility of becoming a Catholic again.

How does it feel to have Frank Black And The Catholics' albums assembled in a vinyl box set, seven years after the CD version?
I try not to invest too much emotionally into these formats. It wasn't released on vinyl originally because it wasn't cost-effective; it's getting released on vinyl now because it is cost-effective. My emotional investment begins and ends with music. Formats are interesting, but they're not the music itself.

How do you feel the band's music has aged in the past 20 years?
I think it's aged well. Whatever doubts there may be about any of the repertoire has more to do with the ditty nature of the material, more than the time it was conceived.

After three solo albums, why did you want to start a new band?
As I recall, it just felt like the thing to do at the time; consistent line-up equals a band.

The Catholics' self-titled debut was the first album to be commercially released to buy as a download. How do you view your part in online music's history?
Like all online "history", it's interesting, but not what it's all about ultimately.

Lyrically, the Catholics' style appeared more straight down the middle than Pixies or your solo music. How did you find the challenge of approaching cliches without becoming cliched?
You make the approach. You either fail or succeed in your ambition. I have experienced both sensations.

Why did recording to two-track become part of the band's ethos?
It happened unplanned on a weekend of "demo" recording. The live to two-track demos revealed themselves to be an exciting paradigm, at least for me.

How do you feel about the band's commercial position in retrospect?
I have no feelings about commercial position as such. You get what you get out of it. It's showbiz.

Would you be interested in ever making more Frank Black And The Catholics music, or touring with them?
Possibly. We're in touch and we've discussed both occasionally. Nothing has materialised yet, but it's a lotta planetary configuration we are talking about.
As told to John Earls.

10cc

Ultimate Hits & Beyond

★★★★

Xploded TV XPLODED 112 V (2CD, 2LP)

I'm Mandy, buy me!

It's a given that 10cc's music will be endlessly recycled, but the concept here differs from numerous previous hits collections by stirring in other, related elements to justify the "Beyond" tag. These include the three biggest singles from Kevin Godley and Lol Creme, plus half a dozen 60s classics written for others and performed here by songsmith/bassist Graham Gouldman. Then there's Hotlegs' hit, five 2006 Godley-Gouldman collaborations and a clutch of unreleased 10cc live cuts from 2010. Perhaps the most tantalising item is Natural Wonder, an unreleased 1976 effort from the original four-piece. Written for a Revlon TV commercial, it has a real Brian Wilson vibe and complements the approach of giving familiar songs a new context. Beyond, indeed! *Michael Heatley*

Tony Allen

Secret Agent

★★★★

World Circuit WLP 082 (2LP)

Afrobeat classic circles back on vinyl

From the money that Tony Allen made alongside Damon Albarn in the supergroup The Good, The Bad And The Queen, the Lagos-born drum magus was able to finance *Secret Agent*, which he leased to Nick Gold's World Circuit label in 2009. The self-produced album received extremely positive reviews at the time and now, two years after Allen's death, has been remastered for a deluxe double vinyl reissue. Allen's effortlessly pulsing polyrhythms provide the heartbeat for the set's 11 tracks whose blend of impassioned call-and-response vocals and jabbing horn riffs over a fluid groove rekindle memories of the inedible Afrobeat sound made by Fela Kuti, whom Allen played with for 15 years. The bounteous highlights range from the mesmerising title track to the more meditative, jazz-tinged Switch and the life-affirming Celebrate with King Odudu on lead vocals. It's addictively danceable.
Charles Waring

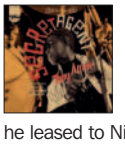

Photo (Frank Back and The Catolichs): Steve Gullick

Miller Anderson
Bright City
★★★
Esoteric ECLEC 2801 (CD)
Soulful Scot goes solo

Miller Anderson played Woodstock fronting the Keef Hartley Band before making a living as a blues-rocker for hire with Spencer Davis, Jon Lord and others. This first solo effort dates from 1971, just post-Woodstock, and originally appeared on Deram. Contributors include Uriah Heep's Gary Thain (bass, a fellow Hartley refugee), Roy Thomas Baker (engineer) and Junior Campbell (orchestration), an indication of his stature. The nearest reference point is Traffic, with woodwind, brass and Hammond organ adorning the songs. Anderson's trademark blues growl alternates with a reedy, almost folky vocal delivery as he revels in his new freedom. High Tide And High Water (also a BBC session cut) has remained a live staple for half a century, but there is much more to admire here. *Michael Heatley*

Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers With Thelonious Monk
Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers With Thelonious Monk (Deluxe Edition)
★★★★
Rhino R1 670841/603497842391 (2CD, 2LP)
Classic collaboration between two jazz giants

No drummer could swing quite as hard as Art Blakey, the inspirational leader of the long-running Jazz Messengers, a prestigious finishing school for jazz's finest young talents. In May 1957, Blakey took his group – with a frontline of saxophonist Johnny Griffin and trumpeter Bill Hardman – into the studio with the iconoclastic pianist/composer Thelonious Monk and came out with a six-track masterpiece. Monk thrives in the presence of Blakey, a polyrhythmic powerhouse whose percussive élan results in unique versions of some of the pianist's most iconic tunes including Blue Monk, Evidence, and a super-charged rendition of the propulsive Rhythm-A-Ning, where Blakey breaks into a seismic drum solo. The second disc spotlights previously unheard alternate takes of all six tracks, none of which are perceptibly inferior to the versions that made the final cut. A valuable jazz history lesson. *Charles Waring*

The Chemical Brothers
Dig Your Own Hole
★★★★★
EMI XDUSTX 2 (CD, 3LP)
Dance masterpiece expanded for anniversary

Cementing the duo's imperial phase, 1997's second Chemical Brothers album houses both the ultimate dance gig opener and set closer, in the grandstanding Block Rockin' Beats and euphoric Private Psychedelic Reel respectively. The latter transcendent epic features Mercury Rev's Jonathan Donohue, one of several guests used perfectly by Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons. Despite his recent work with David Holmes, Noel Gallagher has never sounded so confident on the dancefloor as he does on the thumping Setting Sun. A surprisingly heavy and intense album for such a success, it nonetheless captures the era's hedonism better than anything. After the recent boxset for 1999's *Surrender*, the 25th-anniversary extras are more minimal here: five alternative mixes and outtakes, the mellow Cylinders and a sparser, still beautiful take on Beth Orton collaboration Where Do I Begin the pick. *John Earls*

The Clash
Combat Rock/The People's Hall
★★★★
Sony 9439968552 (2CD, 3LP)
An extended public service announcement with guitars!

Released in May 1982, 18 months after *Sandinista* became arguably one of the most crowd-splitting albums ever, *Combat Rock* was The Clash at their most succinct and pithy. The size and afterlife of big singles Rock The Casbah and Should I Stay Or Should I Go often put the rest of the album in the shade: it's full of style and invention, a diary of where the group were at in '81/82, with guests as diverse as Allen Ginsberg and Futura 2000. Overpowered By Funk, for example, was the perfect partner to The Magnificent Seven, continuing the group's love affair with the groove, emboldened by their legendary performances at Bonds Casino in New York. The additional 12 tracks here offer the fullest representation of the 1981 People's Hall material to date, finally making *Combat Rock* the ambitious double album that Mick Jones originally desired. *Daryl Easlea*

Daft Punk
Tron: Legacy (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)
★★★★
UMC / Disney 8750257UK (2LP)
Decommissioned French robots' Hollywood outing

When the soundtrack to the long-awaited sci-fi sequel *Tron: Legacy* was announced more than a decade ago, fans viewed it as more dithering from a band that was becoming famous for procrastination. Viewed retrospectively, *Tron: Legacy* maps out a whole other Daft Punk, and while it is music made to serve a purpose, it stands up as a singular work and has proven more durable than the movie. It's a spacious and, at times, awesome endeavour, featuring the grandeur of an 85-piece orchestra stitched seamlessly into the French duo's electronic working methods. Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo and Thomas Bangalter had enough savoir faire to downplay their own sonic identity for the cause, instead referencing modern masters such as Hans Zimmer and John Carpenter, as well as the original 1982 score by Wendy Carlos. *Jeremy Allen*

George Duke
No Rhyme, No Reason: The Elektra/Warner Years (1985- 2000)
★★★★
SoulMusic Records QSMCR 5203 T (3CD)
US singer-songwriter's major label years

A multi-talented keyboard player, singer, composer and producer, George Duke earned music degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and San Francisco State University. He recorded albums with French jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty – playing on *King Kong*, Ponty's 1970 homage to Frank Zappa. Duke joined Zappa in 1970 and appeared on over a dozen of Zappa's jazz-rock and orchestral albums. He produced Gladys Knight, The Pointer Sisters and Smokey Robinson and joined Elektra in 1985, debuting with *Thief In The Night*, staking a claim as the king of FM-friendly smooth jazz and funk – with five R&B chart entries to back it up. The 45 tracks are pulled together here on a set drawing from his three Elektra and six Warner Brothers albums, with top quality production and detailed sleevenotes by *RC*'s Charles Waring. *Tony Burke*

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THE bluetones

Hailing from Heston in West London, **The Bluetones** (Scott Morriss – bass, Eds Chesters – drums, Adam Devlin – guitars, and Mark Morriss – vocals) **arrived on the scene in late 1995/early 1996** with the **# 2 single "Slight Return",** and **# 1 debut album "Expecting To Fly".** This album and the following two were included in Edsel's 2021 box set, containing the band's recordings from 1994 to 2002.

superior quality recordings 2003 – 2010
Deluxe 4 CD Box Set

This **second box set** contains **The Bluetones' second period of recordings,** from **2003 to 2010: 50 tracks across four CDs.** It includes the **albums "Luxembourg"** (2003), **"The Bluetones"** (2006) and **"A New Athens"** (2010), plus the **"Serenity Now" EP** (2005), **twelve B-sides**, and **two previously unreleased tracks.** The **four CDs** are presented in **facsimile wallets**, and the **booklet** features **newly-written notes by Adam Devlin on each album and the EP**, along with all the **credits**, and **the singles sleeves featuring Scott Morriss's fabulous artwork.**

luxembourg

Released in **2003**, and the first on their own label Superior Quality Recordings, **"Luxembourg" was the band's fourth album** and features **the singles "Fast Boy"/"Liquid Lips"** and **"Never Going Nowhere"**. As The Guardian review said at the time, *"You can't fault their ever-lush harmonies, or the garage-band scrappiness that gives 'Here It Comes Again' its appeal"*. Now **issued on vinyl for the first time since 2003 (on translucent purple vinyl)**, the inner sleeve features all the **lyrics** and **credits**, **photos**, and a **beautiful drawing** by Scott Morriss.

the bluetones

Released in **October 2006**, **"The Bluetones" was the band's fifth album** and **reunited them with Hugh Jones**, producer of their first two albums. It features **the singles "My Neighbour's House", "Head On A Spike"** and **"Surrendered"**. Now **issued on vinyl for the first time ever (on translucent blue vinyl)**, the inner sleeve features all the **lyrics** and **credits**, **photos**, and another **beautiful drawing** by Scott Morriss.

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SOUL COLLECTOR

By Lois Wilson

Whatever You Want – Bob Crewe's 60s Soul Sounds (★★★★ **Kent**) spotlights the New Jersey writer, producer and arranger's canon. An indelible talent, he was able to move with the times penning doo wop, girl group pop, R&B for the dancefloor and also for the brokenhearted. He also found huge success, of course, writing and producing for Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons. Bookended by Hal Miller and the Rays' sublime An Angel Cried from 1961 and the Time Keepers' 1970 buzzy intro 3 Minutes Heavy, *Whatever You Want* is a joy from beginning to end with further standouts including Jerry Butler's title track, a dramatic ballad from 1963, Shirley Matthews & The Big Town Girls' snappy (You Can) Count On That from the same year and James Carr's punchy Sock It To Me Baby from 1967. The Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons tracks are ace, too. I'm Gonna Change from their 1967 New Gold Hits album was a hit on the 70s northern scene, although it's Valli's (You're Gonna) Hurt Yourself from 65 that provides one of both his and Crewe's finest cuts.

From Plainfield, New Jersey, keyboardist **BERNIE WORRELL** was classically trained at the New England Conservatory Of Music and The Juilliard School and his innovative playing – whether on Hammond B3, RMI Electra, piano or Minimoog – was pivotal in the creation of the P-Funk sound from 1970's *Free Your Mind... And Your Ass Will Follow* by Funkadelic to Parliament's US R&B No 1 Flashlight in '78. That same year, Worrell made his solo debut with ***All The Woo In The World*** (★★★★ **Music On Vinyl**) which was originally released on Arista and is here reissued as a limited edition of 1500 individually-numbered copies on translucent red coloured vinyl. Its seven tracks, all loose jams, all inimitably P-Funk, unsurprisingly so as the album is co-produced by George Clinton, features P-Funk compadres including Garry Shider, Bootsy Collins and Eddie Hazel and has Fred Wesley arranging the horns. The high points are the madcap Woo Together and the 12-and-a-half-minute anthem Insurance Man For The Funk.

RAY CHARLES gets political on 1972's ***A Message From The People*** (★★★★ **Tangerine**). With Quincy Jones producing, Sid Feller arranging, a crack band featuring Freddie Hubbard, Chuck Rainey and Hubert Laws plus the glorious Raelettes on backing vocals, Charles is on fire, aligning himself to Marvin Gaye, Sly And The Family Stone and Stevie Wonder on a set of social conscience gospel, soul and R&B including a cover of the latter named's Heaven Help Us All. Elsewhere he re-energises Lift Every Voice And Sing and America The Beautiful and takes Melanie's What Have They Done To My Song and Dion's Abraham, Martin And John to church.

New York City Blues (★★★★ **Ace**) is the soundtrack companion to the book of the same name by Larry Simon and edited by John Broven. It's a compelling snapshot of a vibrant, eclectic scene and includes Blind Boy Fuller's rockin' Step It Up And Go from 1940, John Hammond's 1965 garage R&B take on Billy Boy Arnold's I Wish You Would featuring Robbie Robertson and Bill Wyman plus the much in-demand Bobby Robinson and Marshall Sehorn-produced Jack That Cat Was Clean by Dr Horse aka Alvergous Pittman from '62.

Reality's Disco Party (★★★★ **Jazzman**) from 1976 was conceived to fail. While the musicians, formerly the Smokin' Shades of Black, led by Dr Otto Gomez, put their heart and soul into the New York session, the label it was released on, TSG, was set up by the legitimate LPG (Lloyd Price Group) company as a tax scam – investors finance a record, it intentionally loses money, they register the loss against their taxes. Nevertheless, *...Disco Party* is an enthralling slab of dancefloor funk and deserves to finally reach its audience.

Nancy Wilson's ***All In Love Is Fair / Come Get To This*** (★★★ **Cherry Red**), her 1974 and '75 albums respectively, signalled a shift from jazz to soul with the recruitment of producer Gene Page. Cushioned in the kind of creamy, lush arrangements coming out of Philly at the time, she's sultry and coquettish on *All In Love Is Fair,* which includes her first US Top 10 R&B hit in a decade, her satisfying take on The Stylistics' You're As Right As Rain written by Thom Bell and Linda Creed. On follow-up *Come Get To This*, produced by Page with his brother Billy, she stamps her authority on Marvin Gaye's title track and If I Ever Lose This Heaven by Leon Ware and Pam Sawyer and returns to the R&B chart with Harlan Howard's He Called Me Baby. *This Mother's Daughter/ I've Never Been To Me* (★★★ Cherry Red) her 1976 and '77 albums, the first produced by Eugene McDaniels, the second by Page with his sibling again, continue in a similar vein.

Durham, North Carolina's **NIKKI HILL** is a blues shouter in the great tradition of Ruth Brown, Etta James and Koko Taylor. Her 2013 record ***Here's Nikki Hill*** (★★★ **Hound Gawd!**) aligns her to Amy Winehouse with 21st-century words pinned to a vintage sound.

EAST OF UNDERGROUND's self-titled record (★★★ **Now-Again**) is an album of soul and funk and includes covers of Curtis Mayfield's (Don't Worry) If There's A Hell Below We're All Gonna Go and The Impressions' People Get Ready plus the Undisputed Truth's Smiling Faces Sometimes. It was recorded by a group of US soldiers drafted to fight in the Vietnam war and stationed in Frankfurt in the early 70s and intended as a recruitment tool for the US Army.

East Coast

East Coast

★★★★

Real Gone Music RLGM 13871 PMI (LP)

1973 funk rarity from short-lived Encounter label

Someone forgot to tell these guys the East Coast already had Philadelphia. But if the Bay Area represented the West, Detroit the North, and Memphis the South, this New York City seven-piece clearly felt the eastern seaboard was theirs for the taking. And it should have been: I Found You marries tight arrangements with runaway energy while You Can't Let It Get You Down burrows deep into Funkadelic's *Maggot Brain* shredding, suggesting that East Coast could have headed in any direction they pleased had they lasted beyond this sole 1973 album. No dead end, it provided a waymarker in singer Gwen Guthrie's rise to fame, and featured the first recorded appearances of future Cameo mainmen Larry Blackmon and Gregory Johnson. *Jason Draper*

Bill Evans

You Must Believe In Spring

★★★★★

Craft Recordings 7226254 (CD, 2LP)

Influential jazz pianist's posthumous masterpiece

With his predilection for delicate melodic filigrees etched on an impressionistic canvas of lush tone colours, Evans revolutionised jazz piano playing in the late 1950s. For this writer, *You Must Believe In Spring*, a trio date recorded in 1977 with the august Tommy LiPuma at the helm, marks the pinnacle of Evans' work. Inexplicably, this achingly beautiful record didn't surface until 1981, a few months after the pianist's death. Perhaps aware that his demise was imminent (Evans suffered drug addiction-related ill health in his final years), the album evinces a sombre elegiac tone, epitomised by the haunting B Minor Waltz, the wistful Gary's Theme and a tender reading of Jimmy Rowles' The Peacocks. This new vinyl edition, mastered by the redoutable Kevin Gray, comes on two 45 rpm discs. Sheer perfection. *Charles Waring*

Go West

Go West (Super Deluxe Edition)

★★★★

BMG 5060516097609 (4CD/DVD, LP)

Pop duo's debut gets the deluxe treatment

The remaster of Go West's 1985 self-titled debut results in the record's nine tracks hitting even harder than the first time around. Full of infectious pop songs, it's a misdemeanour that only one of its five singles cracked the Top 10. *Bangs & Crashes* was a remix album released the following year to capitalise on *Go West*'s success and an expanded version makes up the second disc. The third disc contains a host of demos and rarities while the fourth finds the guys rocking the Hammersmith Odeon for an unreleased 1985 set that shows their blue-eyed soul transferring well to the live environment. A DVD loaded with promo videos, *Top Of The Pops* appearances and a live set from Japan are the icing on the cake. *Peter Dennis*

Godley And Creme

Frabjous Days: The Secret World Of Godley And Creme 1967-1969

★★★★

Grapefruit CRSEG 100 (CD)

Vital piece of Manc history, beautifully presented

The pre-10cc history of Kevin Godley and Lol Creme is so often dismissed in a sentence in biographies. With *Frabjous Days*, David Wells' meticulously researched selection proves that although they may not have been as commercially successful in the 60s as Eric Stewart and Graham Gouldman, their future 10cc partners, musically they were more than equal. Adding to the handful of tracks already available commercially, Wells has pieced together tracks from demos and, in doing so, completes their unreleased album. The 19 tracks are plump with invention. "You've never heard of Chaplin House," sings Godley in one of those strange, post-*Sgt Pepper* baroque tales; Hello Blinkers is a fine slice of discotheque pop, originally pressed privately for Blinkers night club in Manchester. Soon Godley and Creme would be part of Hotlegs, and the rest, as they say... *Daryl Easlea*

Grandmaster Flash, Melle Mel & The Furious Five

Sugarhill Adventures: The Collection

★★★★

Cherry Red ROBINBX 50 (9CD)

Hip-hop pioneers collected

Three Is The Magic Number

Expanded reissue of underappreciated 1957 trio LP commemorates the 100th anniversary of the bassist and composer's birth. *By Charles Waring*

Charles Mingus: ace of bass

Charles Mingus

Mingus Three: Deluxe Edition

★★★★

Rhino/Parlophone 603497841059/1035 (2CD, 2LP)

"My life flashed before my eyes. I was sure I would die." These are the words of the pianist and arranger Sy Johnson in his enlightening liner notes to *Mingus Three*, recalling a fraught first rehearsal with the badass bassist/composer who could scare musicians shitless with just one hard stare. Mingus wasn't averse to using his fists to hammer his point home but on this occasion, sometime in 1960 – three years after *Mingus Three* was recorded – the bassist preferred to punch the piano keys rather than Johnson's face "while glaring into my eyes with a manic intensity". Happily, things didn't take a turn for the worse, as Johnson reveals: "Just as suddenly, he picked up his bass, and resumed playing." The pianist was relieved but mentally scarred; like someone who had endured a soul-searing baptism of fire.

This kind of incident wasn't uncommon for musicians playing with Mingus, whose pugnacious personality and volcanic temperament could be deeply intimidating. But on *Mingus Three*, the bassist's only recording for the New York Jubilee label, Mingus played opposite a pianist he couldn't so easily bully; Hampton Hawes, a technically dazzling bebop heavyweight who gave as good as he got in musical terms. Their interaction on what is one Mingus' most underrated and overlooked albums makes for a fascinating musical dialogue, mediated by Dannie Richmond's simpatico drums and percussion, as they breeze through a selection of standards and largely extemporised original material recorded one day in July 1957.

Mingus supplies the tune Back Home Blues, a lazy nocturnal groove, and the swinging Dizzy Moods while Hampton proffers the bebop-inflected Ham's New Blues; but arguably more impressive are the cover tunes, especially a sizzling uptempo revamp of George Gershwin's Summertime, where Mingus' driving bass line invokes the spirit of Dizzy Gillespie's A Night In Tunisia. Eight recently discovered outtakes from the session are added as bonus material; rather than being merely forgettable also-rans they're uniformly excellent and crucial in aiding our understanding of how the session evolved.

Overshadowed by his Atlantic album *The Clown*, released earlier the same year, the largely unheralded *Mingus Three* has often fallen under the radar of jazz fans; but this reissue proves that it deserves more attention because it highlights Mingus the musician rather than Mingus the composer, revealing his absolute mastery of the upright acoustic bass.

As for Sy Johnson, he lived to fight another day and eventually worked with Mingus on several projects; and amazingly at 92, he's still the arranger for the ongoing Mingus Big Band and living proof that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

COLLECTING... *Charles Mingus*

Charles Mingus and Thad Jones Collaborations Volume 1

(Debut, DLP-17, Vinyl, 10" LP, US, 1955) **£225**
Mingus briefly ran his own label called Debut, which he founded in 1952 with his first wife Celia and the bebop drummer Max Roach, but it only ran for five years. Roach features on this hard-to-find four-track 10" LP, the first of the bassist's two collaborations with trumpeter Thad Jones.

The Clown

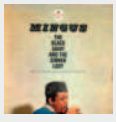
(Atlantic, SD 1260, Vinyl, LP, US, 1957) **£220**
Recorded as a response to critics who had said his music didn't swing, Mingus kicked off *The Clown* with one of his most famous tunes, the pugnacious Haitian Fight Song, on which he could be heard urging his quintet on with raucous shouts. The album's title song, a comedic waltz, combines jaunty music with an improvised spoken narration by Jean Shepherd, a Chicago humorist and radio personality. One of the rarest and most desirable pressings of this album was a 1959 one with a so-called "bull's eye" label, a multi-coloured pinwheel design that was briefly used by Atlantic

A Modern Jazz Symposium Of Music And Poetry

(Bethlehem, BCP 6026, Vinyl, LP, US, 1959) **£75**
Another manifestation of Mingus' desire to fuse jazz with the spoken word, this largely forgotten album – the bassist's second and final LP for the jazz indie label Bethlehem – opens with the evocative Scenes In The City, a vivid portrait of black urban life narrated by the African American actor Melvin Stewart. The words were written by the playwright Lonnie Elder with help from the legendary Harlem poet Langston Hughes.

Mingus Ah Um

(Columbia, CL 1370, Vinyl, Promo LP, US, 1959) **£300**
Containing the original versions of two of Mingus' most famous tunes – Goodbye Pork Pie Hat, a haunting elegy marking the passing of tenor saxophonist Lester Young and Fables Of Faubus, a satirical portrait of a racist US Governor – this album is regarded as one of the greatest jazz records ever released. The promo version with a white and red label is highly coveted; the Columbia label features what collectors call "six eyes," referring to small eye-like symbols on the label's outer edge.(The "six eye" labels were only used by Columbia between 1956 and 1961).



The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady

(Impulse!, A-35, Vinyl, LP, US, 1963) **£90**
Considered Mingus' masterpiece, this Iberian-flavoured album could be described as music for a jazz ballet. It consists of a four-part suite for an 11-piece ensemble that juxtaposes a through-composed score with passages of free-flowing improv. It was the first of three Mingus albums for Impulse!

If The Message – "it's like a jungle sometimes" – invented conscious rap, White Lines (Don't Don't Do It) was conceived as a celebration of cocaine until the team twigged it might get more radio play as the opposite. Still, that double negative winked at listeners. *Sugarhill Adventures: The Collection* is a scintillating anthology, gathering all the crew's essential output: the albums *The Message* and *Work Party* plus singles and remixes. And, in this case, those remixes aren't just filler. While the personnel may have fluctuated, for a brief blaze this gang ruled. Among the highlights, She's Fresh and It's Nasty sound as inventive as ever, and the pinpoint electro of Scorpio is harder, better, faster and stronger than anything Daft Punk did. They got higher, baby. *Chris Roberts*

JAZZ COLLECTOR

By Charles Waring

"Trane was the father. Pharoah Sanders was the son. I was the holy ghost." So said **ALBERT AYLER**, the Cleveland-born saxophonist whose music, with its emotive shrieks and visceral honks, was intensely spiritual and drew heavily on his deep gospel roots. A trailblazer of free improvisation, he died in mysterious circumstances at the age of 34 in November 1970 but just four months before that, he journeyed to Saint-Paul-De-Vence in southern France for a couple of concerts that were recorded and distilled down into two French LPs called *Nuits De La Fondation Maeght* released on the Shandar label. Now for the first time, all the music from his French sojourn is released as ***Revelations: The Complete ORTF 1970 Fondation Maeght Recordings*** (★★★★★ **Elemental**), a deluxe 5LP set mastered by the redoubtable Kevin Gray. It contains over two hours of previously unheard music and is accompanied by a thick, informative booklet packed with reminiscences of Ayler from those who knew him. The sound quality is astonishingly good, capturing the mesmeric performances of Ayler together with saxophonist/vocalist Mary Parks, pianist Call Cobbs, bassist Steve Tintweiss and drummer Allen Blairman. The group's set contains impassioned, shiver-inducing renditions of some of Ayler's most iconic numbers, including Ghosts and Love Cry.

Also mastered for the same record label by the in-demand Mr Gray is another significant limited edition vinyl set: ***Live In Paris*** (★★★★ **Elemental**) by the **CHET BAKER TRIO**. It features recordings made by Radio France in 1983 and '84, which documented the itinerant Oklahoma-born hornblower and vocalist, then in his early fifties, supported by pianist Michel Graillier and bassists Dominique Lemerle and Riccardo Del Fra. Among the highlights is a hard-swinging take on There Will Never Be Another You and a lovely elegiac version of But Not For Me, which shows that Baker's trumpet playing was still at a high level during that particular phase of his career.

Another high quality live recording liberated from the archives is alto saxophonist **JOHN HANDY**'s 1965 album ***At The Monterey Jazz Festival*** (★★★★ **Essential Jazz Classics**). Texas-born Handy rose to fame playing on Charles Mingus' iconic 1959 album *Mingus Ah Um* and soon after began making albums under his own name. This memorable set, which originally contained two super-long tracks shows how Handy was playing unfettered free jazz-style improvisations without dispensing with tonal centres. As a bonus, a later, much funkier track – Tears Of Ole Miss (Anatomy Of A Riot) – recorded live at the Village Vanguard with vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson and guitarist **PAT MARTINO** rounds out the set nicely.

Talking of the late Philly fretboardist, who died last November, a new various artists album called ***Alternative Guitar Summit: Honoring Pat Martino, Volume 1*** (★★★ **High Note**) pays tribute to his memory and music. There are 14 contributors, ranging from Kurt Rosenwinkel to Russell Malone and Peter Bernstein, who all put their own spin on their favourite Martino tunes. Unsurprisingly, it's a very tasteful affair.

The American jazz singer **MARK MURPHY** – a brilliant but underappreciated scat vocalist whom Ella Fitzgerald once described as her equal – was the subject of a fine tribute album in 2019, *Remembering Mark Murphy* by his protégé, New York chanteuse Nancy Kelly. The early part of the Syracuse singer's career is the focus of ***Four Classic Albums*** (★★★ **Avid**), which includes *Meet Mark Murphy...The Singing M*, *Let Yourself Go*, *Hip Parade*, and *Rah*. The latter LP, with a supporting cast that includes pianists Bill Evans and Wynton Kelly, trumpeter Blue Mitchell and drummer Jimmy Cobb, includes a fantastic vocalese version of Miles Davis' Milestones.

Murphy had a fiercely independent spirit, something that can also be said of the gifted Washington DC singer/songwriter **HEIDI MARTIN**, whose latest album, the mesmerising, self-produced ***Gifts & Sacrifices*** (★★★★ **HeidiMartinMusic**), highlights her smoky, Phoebe Snow-like timbre as well as her ability to weld astute socio-political observations with poetic lyrics and cutting-edge sonics. Imagine Joni Mitchell, Michael Franks and Cassandra Wilson rolled into one.

Like Martin, the London-based singer/songwriter **LAURA ZAKIAN** brings a unique artistic sensibility to the art of jazz singing. Her latest opus, ***Dreaming Life*** (★★★ **Laura Zakian**) is a collection of musical ruminations infused with atmosphere and an aching sense of melancholy.

At 83, the revered jazz magus **CHARLES LLOYD** is enjoying one of the most prolific phases of his storied career. ***Trios: Chapel*** (★★★★ **Blue Note**), a beautiful live recording with Bill Frisell and Thomas Morgan, is the first in an album series the veteran saxophonist is calling *Trio Of Trios*; the remaining two titles in the sonic triptych will appear later this year.

For those who prefer their jazz dripping with atmosphere, then the immersive experience that is ***London Fields*** (★★★★ **Here & Now**) served up by Colin Baldry's aptly named **AMBIENT JAZZ ENSEMBLE** should hit the spot. Sounding like the Cinematic Orchestra meets Eno and Moby, perhaps, the band delivers a cache of shimmering soundscapes that resonate like the soundtrack to an imaginary movie.

More mellow magic comes from ***Tremors In Static*** (★★★ **Gondwana**) by **VEGA TRAILS**; it's a side project by Portico Quartet co-founder, bassist Milo Fitzpatrick and Mammal Hands' saxophonist Jordan Smart, whose musical interactions are subdued but inspired.

Much livelier is ***Heat*** (★★★★ **Traumton**) by Austria's **SHAKE STEW**, a uniquely configured seven-piece band (two drummers, two bassists and three horns), whose music is an allusive, hard-to-pin-down blend of disparate elements, ranging from cool Ethio-jazz to blistering Afrobeat grooves. Sizzling.

The singular **MARY HALVORSON** is a guitarist whose innovations have blurred the boundaries between jazz, the avant-garde, rock and noise music. She makes her debut on Nonesuch with two contrasting and spectacular new albums: the iridescent ***Amaryllis*** (★★★★ **Nonesuch**), where she fronts a sextet, and the more tenebrous ***Belladonna*** (★★★★ **Nonesuch**), a set of through-composed pieces featuring the Nivos Quartet. Both are stunning examples of Halvorson's unique approach to guitar playing.

Finally, **BINKER GOLDING** serves up a solo album that's very different from his avant-jazz work with drummer Moses Boyd. Mixed by Hugh Padgham, ***Dream Like A Dogwood Wild Boy*** (★★★★ **Gearbox**) is an eclectic affair that is by far the London saxophonist's most accessible offering yet. Its tracks are very melodic and thanks to Billy Adamson's sterling bottleneck guitar work, the music is infused with a bluesy flavour.

John Lee Hooker and Canned Heat

Hooker 'N Heat

★★★★

BGO BGOCD 694 (2CD)

Celebrated blues reunion

In 1970, the inimitable talents of the legendary John Lee Hooker were introduced to one of the previous decade's outstanding white blues bands. In retrospect, the resulting double-album is also notable for being the last recorded work of Canned Heat's Al 'Blind Owl' Wilson, who died in-between creation and release. His photo appears on a wall behind the band on the cover. The music is split between solo Hooker, duets with Wilson and five fully-fledged band collaborations, between-song chart adding to the intimate atmosphere. Perhaps most impressive is an elongated take on Boogie Chillen which is more than reminiscent of the Heat's On The Road Again. The combination yielded Hooker's first US Hot 100 album, and it still glows today.

Michael Heatley

The Kills

No Wow

★★★★

Domino REWIG 168 (CD/2CD, LP/2LP)

Noughties garage-rock staple gets new mix

Honing the fiery garage rock of their debut album two years earlier, 2005's *No Wow* was as commercial as The Kills got. The eccentric drum-machine grooves and Alison Mosshart's playground chants were still there, but guitarist Jamie Hince's licks were more focused, turning the title track and I Hate The Way You Love into punchy punk assaults, which went on to soundtrack several TV dramas. Intriguingly, that mainstream appeal has belatedly been furthered by a new mix of the whole album by occasional associate and The Black Keys and Pearl Jam producer, Tchad Blake. Available separately or in a double-pack with the original, Blake's mix loses some of the duo's uniqueness, especially in those trademark rhythms, but he also overhauls The Good Ones into steely funk. It remains a good entry point into The Kills' thrillingly dangerous world. *John Earls*

Kokomo

To Be Cool: The Rehearsal Sessions

★★★★

Another Planet APM 010 (CD)

Hot stuff from an ultra cool band

This is the album that never

was for the Brit all-star soul and funk ensemble. These 11 tracks, recorded live in the studio in 1974 when they were struggling for a record deal, only emerged many years later. Here, nearly two decades further on, they're available again, an inspired set taking in Dylan (New Morning), Herbie Hancock (Chameleon), Bill Withers (Friend Of Mine) and more, united by understated guitar (both the Grease Band's Neil Hubbard and Piblokto's Jim Mullen), the powerful sax of Mel (King Crimson) Collins and contributions from other luminaries. This 2CD set adds a previously unheard five-track demo session from the same year (not least Robert Johnson's Sweet Home Chicago) and two demos from a get-together a decade later. *Nick Dalton*

Nektar

Sounds Like This

★★★

Esoteric ECLEC 22796 (2CD)

Euro-Brits go Hammond heavy

Nektar, four British progressive musicians led by Roye Albrighton, had already conquered the continent from their Hamburg base by the time their third album became the first to hit the home market in 1973. It was recorded live in the studio in an attempt to replicate their impressive shows and emerged on double vinyl. Yet it has never been a fan favourite, the dominant organ resulting in an atypically heavy sound when compared with classics *A Tab In The Ocean* and *Remember The Future*. The bonus disc of alternate versions and omitted tracks has appeared in previous

The Cat Who Got The Cream

The great British folk-rock troubadour presents his own archive to the public in one great slab of a boxset.

By David Pollock

Al Stewart: his epic new box set isn't for armchair fans

Al Stewart

The Admiralty Lights

★★★★★

Madfish SMABX1141 (LP boxset)

How much Al Stewart does one listener need? Even the most strident fan of the great folk-rock survivor is about to find out, with this monumental 50-disc vinyl boxset of more or less his entire recorded output. It comprises 21 studio albums, from 1967's *Bedsitter Images* (in its '67 and '70 incarnations) to 2008's *Sparks Of Ancient Light*, 18 discs of unheard live recordings spanning four decades, three discs of BBC sessions from 1965 to 1972, eight records of outtakes and rarities, and much more.

The relative value of a collection like this depends on your love of the artist involved, of course. As it's limited to 2,000 copies, casual listeners might prefer to limit themselves to the classic albums *Modern Times* or *Year Of The Cat*, or one of Stewart's plentiful greatest hits, while the devoted will pay the asking price for what is the final word on his storied career.

For the latter bunch, there are many hours of discovery to be found in the live discs and the offcuts especially, which are so thoroughly immersive that a separate catalogue is included, containing credits, tracklists and recording details for each. There's also a photograph-heavy hardback book which acts as a detailed biography of Stewart's career in album-by-album format, with quotes from the artist, his collaborators and press cuttings of the time.

Think of your favourite artist and this is exactly the type of all-encompassing retrospective you want to see. For fans of Stewart, it's a chance to re-experience the development of his career in its rich entirety. *Bedsitter Images* itself is a strikingly complete debut, filled with pastoral, romantic guitar explorations named after girls, Dylanesque crooning, and ambitious bursts of brass fanfare, string accompaniment and medieval-sounding harpsichord.

The follow-up *Love Chronicles* (1969) is one of the great backing-group curios in rock, with Jimmy Page's plaintive guitar and John Paul Jones' meaty bass adding texture to the sex-fascinated title track, while Fairport Convention's Richard Thompson, Simon Nicol and Martin Lamble play throughout. Later, Rick Wakeman appears on *Orange* (1972), and alongside Dave Swarbrick and Queen drummer Roger Taylor on *Past, Present And Future* (1974).

Stewart's writing and playing has maintained a power and consistency ever since, but this latter album is where his plateau of the 1970s really began in earnest. Turning away from the lighter concerns of a 1960s folk troubadour, it expanded on his interest in historical storytelling, grappling with the legacy of the Second World War on his generation like few other British songwriters, from The Last Day of June 1934's bittersweet reflection on the brief interwar peace, to Post World War Two Blues and its rock'n'roll-referencing look at the events of his lifetime.

This album contains arguably his masterpiece, the eight-minute dissection of the Eastern Front conflict between the Nazis and the Soviet Army that is Roads To Moscow, a song which has a bitter tang of relevance to the world right now. Two years later in 1976, amid a three-album collaboration with producer Alan Parsons, the urbane, sophisticated pop of Year Of The Cat, title track of the album of the same name, briefly made him a transatlantic star.

Q&A

From the road in America, the well-travelled singer-songwriter reflects on the unveiling of a mighty back catalogue.

Does *The Admiralty Lights* contain every single recording you've made?
It's about as complete as you're ever going to get! It covers my entire career, from the earliest Bournemouth demos, right up to unreleased tracks from the last album I made, *Sparks Of Ancient Light*. It was Snapper Music's idea to gather it all together, I didn't believe it would be possible. Everyone thought my appearances on John Peel's Top Gear were lost for ever, even the BBC – but here they are.

Does listening to these songs conjure places, people and performances from the past?
A song will always take you back to a time and a place. When I look down at the set list and see Manuscript, I'm transported back to standing on the beach at Worthing with my grandfather. Surprisingly, many of my most rural songs were composed in my apartment just off Sunset Strip – you can't get a subject more remote from modern day Los Angeles than a 2,000-year-old Scottish warrior poet discovered by Robin Williamson of the Incredible String Band (Merlin's Time).

Which of these albums do you look on as your masterpiece?
My favourite in terms of the lyrics, which are uppermost in my mind when I write, would be *Past, Present And Future*; also *Year Of The Cat* for the production, and *A Beach Full Of Shells* because it's an album I like a lot. But as for calling anything I've recorded a 'masterpiece', I'd have to get up very early in the morning to even get within hailing range of records like *Liege & Lief*, *Revolver* and the second album by The Band.

How do you view *Year Of The Cat*'s title track now?
I'm very glad I recorded it. I'd always wanted to come to America and be successful, and it did it for me. Has it overshadowed everything else? Certainly not in England, where I'm still seen as a member of the 60s folk scene. My audience there is incredibly loyal, I'm very lucky. I can't go anywhere without being asked to play Roads To Moscow, for example, the song seems indestructible, and something like Lord Grenville; the moment I start playing it, boom, everyone starts applauding. I have a theory why none of these songs have aged; if you write outside of your own time, then the songs themselves somehow become eternal.

Who or what was your greatest inspiration?
Movies, literature, biographies, personal experience – it's impossible to select just one. I put them all in a bucket and stir. Old Admirals came from reading the 1921 version of (British naval officer) Jackie Fisher's life, history itself has been incredibly inspirational. For the lyrics it was Lonnie Donegan's wonderful story songs, and for music it was Hank Marvin and Duane Eddy, who I loved equally. And of course, Bob Dylan's influenced every singer-songwriter out there.

What are you doing now and next?
I'm in the middle of a very intense run of gigs. Today I'm in Annapolis, Maryland – the land of crab cakes. I've had two years off, so now I'm working harder than ever. At my age, I'm extremely grateful to be asked to play.
As told to David Pollock

reissue formats, but Uriah Heep, Man and Barclay James Harvest fans could still find this a worthwhile listen.
Michael Heatley

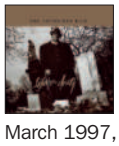
The Notorious B.I.G.

Life After Death

★★★★★

Rhino/Atlantic 0603497841837 (8LP)

Biggie's epitaph reborn



Released mere weeks after he was killed in a drive-by shooting in March 1997, Brooklyn-born Christopher Wallace's second album was named with eerie prescience. If his debut, *Ready To Die* – in which he'd already played out a vision of his death on closing cut Suicidal Thoughts – hadn't already ensured his place in hip hop legend, *Life After Death* would have done so even without the tragic timing. Befitting Biggie's talent and stature, the double-album is celebrated with a 25th-anniversary deluxe edition and now spread across three LPs, with a further five taking in single edits and other mixes. It's hard not to focus on the album's obsession with mortality but, though the action is heralded by the sound of a flatline, *Life After Death* contains some of the most vital hip hop of the era. Slinky professions of prowess (Hypnotize, Mo Money Mo Problems), tips for survival (Ten Crack Commandments) and ruthless takedowns (Kick In The Door) leave little room for doubting Biggie's place at rap's top table but, heard in the year when he would still only have been turning 50, Going Back To Cali has particular resonance. An olive branch wrapped in a claim on the West Coast's electro-funk territory, it's also a sad reminder of loss in a world that had more than enough space for everyone. *Jason Draper*

Photos (Al Stewart): Dave Dyke/Bena; Neville Judd

PSYCH COLLECTOR

By JR Moores

The Fab Four never toured in South America. Instead, a quartet of imposters from Florida conned their way over as "The Beetles" in 1964, while local acts such as Uruguay's Los Shakers ordered moptop haircuts and forged a sound to match. A different kind of tribute was paid by the Brazilian pianist Manfredo Fest and his trio in 1966. Recording as **OS SAMBEATLES**, they produced an LP's worth of instrumental Lennon/McCartney compositions performed in a bossa-nova jazz style. The originals' timeless melodies lent themselves to this form, as if there was any doubt. They're the basis around which Fest and company groove so seductively. When I finally learn to cook properly and fulfil my ambition of opening a feijoada-meets-scouse fusion bistro, **Os Sambeatles** (★★★★ **Vampisoul**) will drift out of the speakers as you gently tuck into your fragrant stew.

Why do Eric Clapton and Peter Green attract all the interest while Stanley Webb remains a footnote in English blues rock? So asks Mark Powell in his sleevenotes to ***Crying Won't Help You Now: The Deram Years (1971-1974)*** (★★★ **Esoteric**). Perhaps it's because the band names Fleetwood Mac and Cream sound cooler than **CHICKEN SHACK**. (Less so, Derek And The Dominos.) There's no denying, however, that Mr Webb knew his way around the neck of a guitar. This 3CD set compiles 1971's meat-and-potatoes *Imagination Lady*, recorded as a power trio, and its superior 1973 follow-up *Unlucky Boy*, which added horns and strings to the recipe. The line-up on the latter record didn't go on the road, so it's another different incarnation that appears on the third disc's live album. Webb thought the Shack didn't play particularly well on the night in question, and he begged their management not to release the recording. Chances are, Disc Two will receive the most spins.

Somewhat quirkier were **SPIROGYRA**, who were part of the Canterbury scene, via Bolton. They were a zany folk-prog affair whose wordy narratives necessitated close attention. They dealt with serious topics of pressing concern: war, hunger, materialism, existentialist woe, exploitative dukes… Yet this was handled in a playful way that usually skirted earnestness. Adding a handful of bonus tracks, ***The Future Won't Be Long: The Albums (1971-1973)*** (★★★★ **Esoteric**) hosts the group's three studio albums, all of which deserve greater contemplation than they've received historically.

Lance Barresi and Daniel Hall's long-running series of proto-metal and stoner rarities shows no sign of running out of motorcycle gas. Given the nature of the blues-based genres under documentation, ***Brown Acid: The Fourteenth Trip*** (★★★ **RidingEasy**) contains the odd generic number every now and again. The Legends wear their influences so openly on their sleeves that, halfway through Fever Games, they start namechecking Hendrix and more. Others come into their own, such as Trolley Co. whose Signs is possessed with a lunatic edge. Another distinctive cut is I've Been You which seems to be the only thing, bar its B-side, that was ever recorded by Mijal & White. That's a shame because the song is catchy and delightfully wonky in equal measure. Furthermore, based on the evidence here, Blue Creed were fronted by an actual werewolf. That might explain why they never played a gig. What if it fell on a full moon?

This recurrent lack of live activities is harshing my buzz, so let's turn to **AVARUS**. Recorded in the Düsseldorf venue that provides its title, ***Salon Des Amateurs*** (★★★★ **Pome Pome Tones**) captures a set from 2011 during which the Finnish collective were joined by American guitarist Jeffrey Alexander and German synth player Moritz Kleiner. Each untitled piece lasts a whole side of the LP (or cassette, if you're that way inclined) and they're both about as colourfully abstract as free-rock gets. For fans of Amon Düül II, Faust, Sunburned Hand Of The Man, No-Neck Blues Band, Jackie-O Motherfucker, and being pleasurably confused in an unfamiliar labyrinth.

There's been a trend for particularly frantic psych rock over the last few years, with bands like King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard and Oh Sees churning out prog-length LPs full of giddy epics at superhuman rate. Perhaps they're trying to get as much done as possible before the rise of the planet's final tides. Helsinki's **KALEIDABOLT** aren't as prolific as the two aforementioned groups (their last full-length came out in 2019, the lazy buggers) but their vibrant style casts similar spells. It feels as though they've worked a little harder on the choruses and graspable hooks this time round. Even so, the emphasis throughout ***This One Simple Trick*** (★★★★ **Svart**) remains on cramming as many ideas as possible into each sprightly number without pausing for breath. They rattle through their multifaceted song structures and shifting time signatures in a way that's irresistibly fun, yet unfathomably complicated if you actually stop to think about it.

Similarly energetic are **ECSTATIC VISION** who are based in Philadelphia but have at least one ear pointed in the direction of Detroit. As with prior transmissions, ***Elusive Mojo*** (★★★★ **Heavy Psych Sounds**) is a hoot and then some. Imagine an MC5/Stooges supertroop, fronted by Lemmy, with hard-funk-era Miles Davis as benevolent musical dictator. The result is… How does the old saying go? "Mamma mia, that's a spicy meatball!".

Prowler

Reactivate

★★★★

Hear No Evil HNECD 166 (CD)

NWOBHM outfit finally get to shine

Yet another overlooked NWOBHM band, Basildon-based Prowler are really only famous for their contribution to MCA Records' 1980 *Brute Force* compilation (recently covered in *Please Release Me*), Gotta Get Back To You. This collection kicks off with that song, produced by Chris Tsangarides in July 1980, and then takes in another three cuts also recorded by the legendary producer later that year. Unsurprisingly, the material is prime-time NWOBHM, riff-driven, melodic, and utterly glorious, and on the basis of the evidence here they really should have broken through. A couple of later re-workings, a live version of Rocksong Part II/Heavy from December 1980 and two extremely good songs recorded when the lads underwent a temporary name-change to Samurai, complete this very welcome retrospective. *John Tucker*

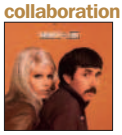
Nancy Sinatra & Lee Hazlewood

Nancy & Lee

★★★★★

Light In The Attic LITA198-1-3 (CD, LP)

The peak of an era-defining collaboration



It was a gloriously unlikely partnership. The Marlboro and Chivas Regal-stenched cowboy and the little girl lost. And it resulted in some of the most oddball hits of the 60s including '66 chart-topper These Boots Were Made For Walkin'. But it was the contrast between Nancy's softer low range and Lee's gravelly baritone which created the real magic. The first of two albums they made together (the other appeared in 1972), *Nancy & Lee* is a baroque-soaked gem with horns, harpsichord and orchestra (conducted by Billy Strange) embellishing some of Hazlewood's greatest songs: Sand, Summer Wine and the exquisitely demented Some Velvet Morning. Charming covers, too, of Billy Edd Wheeler's Jackson and You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'. All in all, a totally sublime record. *Johnnie Johnstone*

Mavis Staples & Levon Helm

Carry Me Home

★★★★

Anti- EPIT 27859-2 (CD)

Two greats combine on lost set from 2011

Recorded before an audience at Levon Helm's studio in Woodstock in 2011, a year before Helm died, *Carry Me Home*'s choice of material makes for a wonderful set of gospel, R&B and blues, including covers of The Impressions' This Is My Country, a cappella gospel on Farther Along, while the gospel classic Handwriting On The Wall and Mississippi Fred McDowell's You Gotta Move are taken at rockabilly pace. Dylan's Gotta Serve Somebody is bluesy funk and the Staples original The Last Time is performed as a downhome blues and the set closes – inevitably – with The Band's The Weight complete with tuba solo from Garth Hudson. It's absolutely stunning stuff. *Tony Burke*

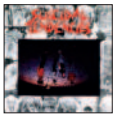
Suicidal Tendencies

Suicidal Tendencies

★★★★

Munster FLP 1011 (LP)

Californian upstarts' crossover classic



Although highly influential, Suicidal Tendencies were often uncomfortable with their own popularity. They once disbanded, briefly, after a dismal tour with Metallica, whose audience reminded Mike Muir of the schoolmates he'd always avoided. The permanently bandana-ed singer would also feud with Megadeth and Rage Against The Machine, two of many acts with a debt to his own band's fusion of hardcore punk and heavy metal. The brattish energy of 1983's debut is complemented perfectly by Muir's sardonic lyrical eye. He condemns subliminal advertising, frets about dead-end jobs and fantasises about shooting Reagan. It includes Institutionalized, ST's timeless anthem of intragenerational disconnect. "My parents were always there for me," Muir informed *Metal Hammer* a few years ago. "I was very fortunate." *JR Moores*

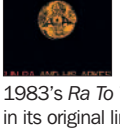
Sun Ra

Ra To The Rescue

★★★★★

Modern Harmonic MH-8822 (CD, LP)

First ever reissue of ultra-rare jazz recording



A bona fide rarity in the back catalogue of jazz's own cosmonaut, 1983's *Ra To The Rescue* in its original limited edition Saturn pressing came in a

Nancy & Lee: although here they're actually Lee & Nancy

hand-coloured cardboard sleeve with no credits; and to add to the mystery, it featured tracks recorded at different, unspecified sessions. Copies have exchanged hands for as much as £400 but now you can get your hands on a mint pressing for a fraction of that sum, thanks to Modern Harmonic, who are doing a sterling job in making obscurities from Ra's canon widely available. The music here ranges from cosmic call-and-response chants (Children Of The Sun) and piano-led blues stomps (Back Alley) to percussive jams (Drummerlistics), sunny calypsos (Fate In A Pleasant Mood) and insane avant-jazz (the bewitchingly cacophonous Space Shuttle). A truly phantasmagorical experience. *Charles Waring*

David Sylvian
Sleepwalkers

★★★★★

Gronland LPGRON 256 (CD, 2LP)

Sumptuous compilation of classic collaborations

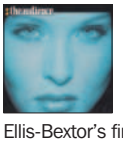
Originally released in 2010, these alliances (from Sakamoto to Nine Horses) and alt-takes from the 2000s re-emerge, tweaked, with the previously unreleased tracks Modern Interiors (typically stark yet beautiful) and Do You Know Me Now? (acoustic, with a rich melody). Those replace Ballad Of A Dead Man and Playground Martyrs. These melancholy songs – and they are, at heart, songs rather than sonic experiments – find the overlap between his lush romantic work and his out-there esotericism. That's in no way meant as faint praise: it's an exquisite treat to hear that resonant voice moving with, not against, the flow. There's commentary on the real world too, and even – gosh! - swearing on the icy heat of the title track. *Chris Roberts*

theaudience
theaudience

★★★

Past Night From Glasgow PNFG 29 (2LP)

Sophie Ellis-Bextor's Britpop years earn reappraisal



"It's unfashionable, I guess/To knock success," are Sophie Ellis-Bextor's first lines on A Pessimist Is Never Disappointed, the opening and best song on her old band theaudience's sole album, from 1998. Now she's the nation's favourite, thoroughly likable disco mum, it's easy to forget her and guitarist Billy Reeves' indie-pop also-rans from the tail-end of Britpop. It's also pleasing, in light of her recent successes, to reassess them in their own right. Their singles still pack heat, including I Got The Wherewithal, which fuses PJ Harvey with French chanson, and breezy Camdenite glam-rocker I Know Enough (I Don't Get Enough). The production is occasionally uninspiring, but the quality of the choruses and lyrics suggests this was a group trying hard to be ABBA, not Sleeper. *David Pollock*

Kim Wilde
Kim Wilde

★★★★

Cherry Red PCRPOPLP 212 X (LP)

Select

★★★

Cherry Red PCRPOPLP 213 X (LP)

Catch As Catch Can

★★★

Cherry Red PCRPOPLP 214 X (LP)

Coloured splatter vinyl outings for 80s popper

The first three Kim Wilde albums witness her exploding onto the early 80s pop scene, then trying to locate her niche. The debut is a minor classic, her brother and dad's songs and production finding the sweet spot between new wave's exhilarated rush and Kim's plaintive yet assertive vocal style. *Smash Hits* called it "the best Blondie album for years", but what was once snark now reads as high praise. Chequered Love is almost as giddy as Kids From America. The follow-up, *Select*, went more synthy, but on hypnotic highlight Cambodia played smartly on latent depths. *Catch As Catch Can* deployed the atypical jazz-swing of Love Blonde to shunt through some weird electronic funk. It still catches a moment. *Chris Roberts*

The Wolfhounds
Bright & Guilty

★★★

Optic Nerve OPNCX (2LP)

Indie experimentalists' special second

The Wolfhounds' blend of car-crash Beefheart guitars, crooked melodies and rumbling Fall rhythms holds up well. Like The Nightingales, appreciation filtered through belatedly due to the band's integrity and perseverance (they've released three albums in the last decade). Here on their second album, which comes with a second disc nesting B-Sides and out-takes including two twisted Kinks covers (I'm Not Like Everybody Else and Set Me Free), tracks such as Non-Specific Song and Charterhouse (a savage stab at upper-class privilege) showcased David Callahan's acetous wordplay and Matt Deighton's crackling guitar lines to full advantage, deftly employing shade and shifting tempos. Regrettably, despite occasionally hitting poppier notes (single Happy Shopper, Ex-Cable Street) the Essex chaps often sounded too grimy and 'Northern' to become a household name. *Johnnie Johnstone*

XTC
Mummer

★★★★★

Panegyric APELP 106 (LP)

First time on wax since '86 for post-punkers' sixth

The latest in Panegyric's faultless series moves *Mummer*'s inner sleeve up front as per Andy Partridge's original wishes. Otherwise, it's a straightforward reissue – the master tapes are long lost, so no chance of a Steven Wilson remix. If anything, the no-frills approach emphasises how extraordinary 1983's *Mummer* is. The departure of drummer Terry Chambers and the decision to quit touring seemed to embolden the band – *none* of this had to be recreated on-stage, so why not go for broke? The result is an album teeming with unlikely ideas performed with panache: Beating Of Hearts' fusion of Eastern psych and tribal rhythms; the relentlessly catchy agrarian pop prog of Love On A Farmboy's Wages; the tense, nightmarish soundscapes of Deliver Us From The Elements and trippy dub of Human Alchemy (both of which suggest that, at this point, Kate Bush was the closest Partridge had to a peer). A welcome return of a densely packed and often unfairly overlooked marvel. *Jamie Atkins*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Bickershaw Festival
50th Anniversary

★★★★

Ozit Morpheus OzitCD 56722 (CD)

Dead, alive in the water

Not even its 50 tracks do justice to the scale of this six-disc set celebrating Bickerhsaw Festival, the May 1972 bash that took place on a drenched site betwixt Manchester and Liverpool. Of 28 Grateful Dead workouts making up their four-hour set (imagine watching *that* while wearing soggy pants), a mesmeric The Other One tops 30 minutes and five more top 10. Their set has been available alone, and as part of a boxed music'n'book with the other two discs, but this is the CD-only debut. Festival cherry-picks are a wild mix, from The Kinks (Lola) to the Flamin' Groovies (Jumping Jack Flash), Donovan's Catch The Wind to several by Captain Beefheart and six from New Riders Of The Purple Sage. Splendid music and perfect sound desk quality. *Nick Dalton*

Gotta Get A Good Thing Goin' – Black Music In Britain In The Sixties

★★★★★

Cherry Red CRJAMBOX 009 (4CD)

Essential overview charting the influence of Black music in the UK

Gotta Get A Good Thing Goin' is a collection that truly celebrates the breadth of black music in the UK in the 60s. Whereas one would expect R&B, soul and ska, it is fascinating to hear easy listening, rock and roll and Merseybeat here, too. With the Windrush Diaspora rightly enjoying its most positive representation than at any point in the past 70 years, *Gotta Get A Good Thing Goin'* is both significant and timely. Extensively annotated, it is far, far beyond an arid history lesson as any compilation with artists ranging from Cleo Laine to Clyde McPhatter, Geoff Love to Laurel Aitken and Shirley Bassey to Kenny Lynch can only offer unbounded joy. The path is surely clear for the same treatment for the next two decades? *RC* is in the queue. *Daryl Easlea*

The Rough Guide To Delta Blues Vol. 2

★★★★

World Music RGNET 1417 (CD)

The origins of the blues, take two

This follow-up to 2017's initial volume features Son House's Dry Spell Blues, Skip James' haunting Cherry Ball Blues, Memphis Minnie and Kansas Joe's salacious Can I Do It For You? and Charley Patton's growling Shake It And Break It alongside some lesser known cuts, such as Tommy Johnson on Maggie Campbell, Robert Wilkins' Rolling Stone from 1928 and an associate of Robert Johnson, Willie Brown's original of Future Blues – a Canned Heat staple. Louise Johnson's All Night Long in an outstanding piano blues take and Mississippi Matilda is accompanied by husband Sonny Boy Nelson. The Mississippi Mud Steppers (actually jug band The Mississippi Sheiks), meanwhile, are on toe tapping form on Vicksburg Storm, while Johnny Temple signposts the route to post war Chicago blues. An enjoyably thorough set. *Tony Burke*

Sharayet El Disco
Egyptian Disco & Boogie Cassettes 1982-1992

★★★★

Wewantsounds WWSLP 60 (LP)

Frankly groovy eastern floorfillers

Curated by the Disco Arabesquo collective, *Sharayet El Disco* is an teeming banquet of joyous grooves, offering a glimpse into how disco developed in the Middle East, enabled by the burgeoning of cheap cassette technology. Among the highlights are Dr. Ezzat abou Ouf & el four M's Genoun el Disco, which has a primitive beatbox puttering away while the melody line freely snaffles Dance In The Old Fashioned Way and Love Is In The Air. Hazeny by Al Massrieen is a blast – falling somewhere between Boney M and the Blockheads – and is about how music can shake your soul; and Youm wi Lilah by Firkit Americana Show, which is a jazzed-up interpretation of The Girl From Ipanema, brings a degree of nonchalance to proceedings. *Daryl Easlea*

Photo (Nancy & Lee): Ron Joy/Boots Enterprises

New Albums

Happy Medium

Radiohead offshoot conjure up radiant debut.

By Jamie Atkins

Photo (The Smile): Alex Lake

The Smile

A Light For Attracting Attention

★★★★

XL XL 1196 (CD, 2LP)

What's in a name? The Smile is a new band comprising Radiohead's creative engine room – Thom Yorke and Jonny Greenwood – and Sons Of Kemet drummer Tom Skinner, produced by the sixth Radiohead member, Nigel Godrich.

By today's standards, it wouldn't have been beyond the pale for The Smile to trade under the Radiohead name. Pink Floyd are releasing new music with one founder member and the guitarist who joined after their glory years. Let's not get started on the line-up of wacky-shirted uncles who pass as most of The Beach Boys. And the current East 17 line-up features backing singer/bad boy Terry, along with a couple of Johnny Come Latelys presumably recruited from a local hard man agency. Still, if there's anything the last few decades have taught us, it's that Radiohead are very much *not* East 17.

Making a new start as The Smile feels like a way for Yorke, Greenwood and Godrich to work together without the pressure and expectations that come with a new Radiohead album. Not only that, but getting the band together would've been a logistical nightmare considering the events of the past few years. Indeed, Greenwood told *NME* back in September, "The Smile came about from just wanting to work on music with Thom in lockdown. We didn't have much time, but we just wanted to finish some songs together. It's been very stop-start, but it's felt a happy way to make music." Meanwhile, introducing the jazz-honed percussive prowess of Skinner into the mix gives the long-term collaborators a chance to spice up their relationship, one unexpected time signature at a time.

The decision has paid off. *A Light For Attracting Attention* feels like an album that exists on its own terms, made for the right reasons. Imaginative arrangements and instrumentation abound, as if a shake-up of personnel and working methods has given the musicians license to stray from well-worn paths with unexpected and often glorious results.

Opening track The Same begins in ominous fashion: warped, pulsing synth stabs; one of those drifting, near-slurred Yorke melodies; a feeling of slow-building tension. Where that strain might break in explosive fashion on a Radiohead album, here it's allowed to rise to an almost unbearable level, with layers of circling guitar, nightmarish strings and distortion. Until suddenly, its abrupt end makes it feel like a troubled prelude, rather than a grandstanding opener.

The Opposite kicks in with an irresistible, begging-to-be-sampled clipped groove from Skinner. Guitars pile in playing a sort of spidery funk, Yorke is in sarky, bullish mode ("Can we have the next contestant please") over a haunting choir of his own backing vocals. It's a fantastically twitchy, Can-like expression of the freedom The Smile gives these musicians.

Next up, the blistering garage rock of You Will Never Work In Television Again blasts things wide open with glee. Greenwood seems to have found a box of pedals lost around the time of recording No Surprises B-Side Palo Alto and Yorke's vocals are a deliciously belligerent howl ("You sad fuck/You throw small change/Take your dirty hands off my love" indeed). Anyone who's spent decades yearning for the guitar rock Radiohead mostly abandoned around 1995, look away – they could do it all the time, they were just playing with ya.

Pana-Vision changes the mood instantly. A piano loop reminiscent of Greenwood's soundtrack to Paul Thomas Anderson's 2017 film *Phantom Thread* provides the foundations for a cinematic epic. Again, Yorke is in fantastic vocal form, proving his angelic falsetto is very much intact before letting rip as strings and horns swell around him.

The Smoke acts as a palate cleanser, less of a song and more of a vehicle for an ingenious, supple bassline. Which is more than enough, it turns out. Yorke adds a neat juxtaposition with dreamy vocals, but less is more here.

Speech Bubbles slows things back down, beginning with Yorke cooing beautifully over spare percussion and drone-like organ, before Greenwood arpeggios like it's *In Rainbows* all over again and all is right with the world. It's another example of the inventive arrangements that contribute towards the album's success. Similarly, the math rock frenzy of Thin Thing may be one of the least striking tracks here but there's still plenty to enjoy in its energy and dub-like effects on Yorke's vocals.

It wouldn't be a Radiohead-affiliated album without the snazzing up of a near-mythical track – enter Open The Floodgates. First played by Thom at an Atoms For Peace soundcheck in 2006 and revisited a handful of times in 2009, what was a slow-moving, fairly unremarkable piano song has been transformed into something sublime, with layers of pulsing electronic bleeps flitting around Yorke's powerful vocal like woozy fireflies.

The stunning Free In The Knowledge follows suit: Yorke's vocals are Exit Music-intimate as he goes for the emotional jugular with one of his most direct songs in many years. A special mention, too, for the swoonsome string arrangement, another example of Greenwood's enormously successful sideline as a soundtrack composer influencing his main gig.

The skittering, frenetic A Hairdryer breaks up the beauty nicely before the meandering Waving A White Flag offers more in the way of string-soaked filmic heaviness. We Don't Know What Tomorrow Brings is a thrilling post-punk juggernaut. Still, this clutch of songs feel less vital than those that preceded them, as if they were a warm-up for the closing track.

Skrting On The Surface was performed live by Yorke back in 2009 and revived by Radiohead in 2012. While the full band live versions feel ponderous and claustrophobic, here it's an elegiac wonder. Again, it has the warmth of *In Rainbows*, but adds a bucolic string arrangement and free-sounding horns to hypnotic effect.

Far more than an indulgent side project, *A Light For Attracting Attention* deserves to be taken on its own merits as a daring, invigorating and often very moving piece of work in its own right. Its genre-hopping, musically curious approach has effectively given The Smile free reign to do whatever they please should they reconvene, and the material will make for some stunning live shows. It should also give those involved a sense of renewed purpose when it comes to the next Radiohead project, whenever that may appear. For now, though, The Smile can stay another day.

The Smile: Mmm, that's more of a grimace, actually

Branching Out

Victory lap, or onwards march? Prog brainiacs return with options open. *By Kevin Harley.*

Porcupine Tree: a reunion more successful than this photo suggests

Porcupine Tree

Closure/Continuation

★★★★

Music For Nations 19439956901 (CD/CD/Blu-Ray, 2LP)

Over a long decade for close followers of Porcupine Tree, something was ticking away behind frontman Steven Wilson's evasive interview manoeuvres. While Wilson equivocated on Porcupine Tree's future, he was busily amassing an archive of slow-burning collaborations with drummer Gavin Harrison. As lockdown bit hard, Wilson, Harrison and keyboardist Richard Barbieri worked these fragments and more into collaborative songs, with the band's defining impetus guiding the way: always recognisably themselves, always determinedly different.

That combination is slickly channelled into the teasingly titled – old habits – *Closure/Continuation* (or *C/C*). With bassist Colin Edwin out, the band have reconvened in a new collaborative formation as a limber power trio, refreshed by sundry solo and extra-curricular adventures. Veering between encapsulations of a well-travelled career and open doors (potentially) to future options, the result perhaps misses the conceptual cogency of earlier Tree peaks. But it doesn't want for controlled reach. Over a tight 48 minutes, *C/C* weds a reinvigorated affirmation of band identity to expansive energies, all to confident effect: "The sum of all, of new and old," as Wilson's lyrics put it.

Initial evidence of change arrives with Harridan, where Wilson's slapped funk bass heralds bold gear-shifts even as the Porcupine Tree imprint clarifies. Barbieri's limpid washes of *Blade Runner*-ish synth atmospherics and Wilson's crashing guitars occupy shared space, held in tense, heavy and flexible formation. Meanwhile, Harrison's cardiac-routine rhythm work summons hammering grandeur and nimble grooves in equal measure; close your eyes and you can picture Thom Yorke wobbling his head in approval.

A more melodic bent buoys up Of The New Day, a careworn single giving Wilson's Floyd love full rein. If echoes of *Lightbulb Sun* or *Stupid Dream* also resonate, the result stands as a rarefied take on such, with an airy sense of graceful resilience that – though it predates lockdown – will surely connect with lockdown-bruised listeners.

In Absentia is a closer cousin to Rats Return, whose stop-start riff contortions mount revitalised nods to earlier prog-metal PTree highs. While Wilson's lyrics bristle with bile, the song's knotty convolutions hold their own between modern math-rock experimenters such as Black Midi and veteran prog practitioners such as Rush. Talking of whom, an Alex Lifeson-esque guitar break opens Dignity, another song that brings to mind Wilson's solo work (notably, *Hand. Cannot. Erase.*) in its empathy for lost souls in the city.

Darker twists on modern anxieties shape Herd Culling, which evokes Wilson's fascination with film in its ominous horror-movie lyrics. Between lights in the sky, scratching at the doors and curses on the land, the sense of apocalyptic interior dread oozes a kind of miasmic gloom not many miles removed from Radiohead's Climbing Up The Walls.

The reference points for Walk The Plank come from closer to home. Continuing the turn away from guitars that distinguished Wilson's *The Future Bites* (2020), the song's mix of queasy atmospherics and experimental electronics also marks fresh territory by foregrounding Barbieri's unmistakably ambient imprint. Finally, Chimera's Wreck extends a gift to the old-guard fans in its embrace of the prog-epic jugular, building incrementally through acoustic passages and offbeat time signatures to further echoes of Rush's influence – if the riffs are Lifeson-esque, the bubbling basslines honour Geddy Lee's fleet-fingered example.

Perhaps most pertinently, Wreck's lyrics meditate on change, age and legacy, all issues that circle this most confident of comeback/farewell albums. "We can still find there's a future in tomorrow," sings Wilson, ever the tease. Do Porcupine Tree have a future after their upcoming tour? No one involved knows, but the lingering question seems clear. When the suggestion of closure is this strong, how could continuation not be in consideration?

Q&A

Keyboard wizard Richard Barbieri unpacks a freshly collaborative resurrection…

Your last show was 12 years back. Did you anticipate such a long break?
It was a growing surprise. I expected there would be a break of a couple of years and I presumed we'd carry on. But Steven wanted to embark on a solo career. It slowly became apparent. It's like detective work. I only just discovered recently that Steven and Gavin were working together in 2011-12, on ideas. At one point I left it behind emotionally, left the whole thing and forgot about it. I made solo albums. Then around 2017, 2018, I became more involved. When we got to lockdown, everything accelerated and we knew it was a Porcupine Tree album. It was unmistakably us. It had the DNA.

You had your solo career. Did you have any reservations about reforming or did it feel natural?
It felt quite natural. I think they had more reservations about reconvening with me, possibly. Not in a musical sense but in a sense that the last tour we did wasn't great. We were touring too much. We'd made an album that for the first time didn't feel like a move forwards. It was plateau-ing. So I was keen to make another. I didn't want it left with that album and I didn't want it left with that tour. My motivation was to make a great album and to have a tour where we're all friends.

The album is your most collaborative. Was that an organic development or a mandate?
It was a mandate, really, from Steven. He saw no point after having written five or six solo albums to turning up and saying, right, here's 90 per cent of the material. It's the most I've been involved with the writing, production and presentation. And it's the first Porcupine Tree album that just features three people. It distils it down to the core of the band.

Is Chimera's Wreck a gift to the fans? It's the most prog track here…
When I first heard it, I was like, This is like something from the 70s. But there is always that element lurking around the corner in our music. It is a prog epic, isn't it?

There's a sense of anticipation surrounding this album. Did you get a sense of that building while the band were away?
I was kind of aware. Probably Steven was most aware because his fanbase were constantly reminding him that they wanted him to make another. And because of the sheer body of work that we've created, and the quality, I think a lot of young people started to get into the band. In some places, they're crazy for us. We sold 9,000 tickets in an hour in Chile. And these are kids. They're not going to be old prog-heads.

The title is deliberately ambiguous. Do you feel it would be a shame to call closure, given that you're on such form?
We don't know. Any decision on finishing something is always done quite quickly, isn't it, on the spur of the moment. I think either way, we can't lose. We were determined to have a great time and make this fun. We've made what we think is one of our best albums. If we call it a day, we'll be quite satisfied. But we're leaving the door open.
As told to Kevin Harley

!!!

Let It Be Blue

★★★★

Warp WARPLP 339 (CD, LP)

Clutter-free funk from Sacramento scenesters

Back in 2000, !!!'s self-titled debut contained a track entitled There's No Fucking Rules, Dude. If ever a group had a mission statement, it was that. Although they have been in the indie mainstream for two and a half decades now, !!! (pronounced Chk Chk Chk) still feel fresh. Their ninth album, *Let It Be Blue*, still continues that mission, combining minimalism, electro-pop, dance-punk and impeccable grooves.

Let It Be Blue is possibly the most focused the group have been. With the acoustic 'Laurel Canyon amuse-bouche' Normal People to open, the following 37 minutes are full of handsomely terse funk. The hands-in-the-air daftness of Panama Canal is a standout and recasting R.E.M.'s Man On The Moon as some lost Ze Records/no-wave outtake goes beyond gimmick and works incredibly well. *Daryl Easlea*

All Them Witches
Live On The Internet
★★★
New West LPNW 5589 (2CD, 3LP)
Lockdown but not out: Nashville rockers prevail

After the under-powered *ATW* (2018), Nashville's sulphurous psych-rockers rediscovered their reach on *Nothing As The Ideal* (2020). As Covid curtailed album touring plans, the quartet-turned-trio occupied a studio to broadcast that ready-to-go fervour online for lockdown-atomised fans. Out on vinyl, the result is a broiling declaration of dynamism and determination from gig-starved rock lifers, kickstarted imposingly by the Bonzo-esque bludgeon, expansive riffs and vocal declamations of Blood And Sand/Milk And Endless Waters. Elsewhere, Witches buffet on the Sabbath-indebted Dirt Preachers, burn slow on Saturnine And Iron Jaw and dredge up something primordial for the sludgy mysticism of 1X1. If Rats In Ruin overreaches for the epic, Enemy Of My Enemy finds Witches in their stoner-rock element, churning out monster riffs in a spirit of pronounced indomitability. *Kevin Harley*

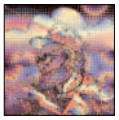
Bangs & Talbot
Back To Business
★★★
Acid Jazz AJX 640 (CD, LP)
Funk DJ and Style Councillor team up

The DJ/producer who coined the term "acid jazz," Chris Bangs is also a percussionist, an able foil for The Style Council/Dexys keyboardist Mick Talbot's first non-sessioneewwr album since he was in 00s funk supergroup The Players. Bar a chintzy cover of Marvin Gaye's How Sweet It Is, the duo create their own energetic instrumentals.

A couple of tracks tip into genre stereotypes: Leela's Dance and Kookie T could be from a cheesy spy film spoof. Mostly, Bangs & Talbot spur each other on to showing tough musicianship and frantic riffing. Surf'N'Turf and Stingray – the latter recorded in front of an appreciative Californian club crowd – are tight funk workouts worthy of any DJ's attention.

Occasionally missing a vocalist, mostly a lively adventure from scene evergreens.
John Earls

Brandon Coleman
Black Interstellar Space
★★★★
Brainfeeder BFDNL101 (CD, LP)
Keyboard cosmonaut's third album puts the fun back into funk



Dubbed "Professor Boogie" by Kamasi Washington, whose band he's played in for several years, Coleman is a self-taught keyboardist from Los Angeles whose stock has been on the rise since *Resistance*, his 2018 debut for Flying Lotus' Brainfeeder label. His latest opus reflects the keyboardist's long-time enthusiasm for sci-fi movies set in space and offers the sonic equivalent of a meditation on the vast expanse of nothingness where "no one can hear you scream," although there's nothing scary about Coleman's joyous cache of vocoder-led astral funk influenced by Herbie Hancock and Parliament. Among the standouts are the two-part We Change, featuring Kamasi Washington and trumpeter Keyon Harrold; On The One, a chunk of Prince-like synth funk; and the lush Say When. Cosmic, man. *Charles Waring*

Steve Earle
Jerry Jeff
★★★★
New West CDNW 6534 XIE (CD, LP)
Country maverick takes a walk on the wild side

One country renegade salutes another on *Jerry Jeff*, Earle in his best good humour singing the songs of Jerry Jeff Walker – in effect the third of a trilogy honouring his heroes following albums devoted to Townes Van Zandt and Guy Clark.

This is anything but a poignant reflection on a great songwriter; instead it echoes Walker's freewheeling, smile-flashing style, a party rather than a tribute. Kicking off with Gettin' By and quickly followed by Gypsy Songman, Walker's spirit is everywhere, Earle's band the Dukes walking in the footsteps of his own hard-hitting combo, the Gonzo Compadres.

And yet everything is turned on its head with Mr Bojangles, Walker's much-covered classic, which gets a moving, soulful treatment here, accompanied by swathes of fiddle and squeezebox.
Nick Dalton

Liam Gallagher: take your coat off, love, or you won't feel the benefit when you go out

George Ezra
Gold Rush Kid
★★★
Columbia 19439984121 (CD, LP, Cassette)
Singer-songwriter continues stadium rise

When Herts-raised George Ezra emerged in 2015, the world didn't exactly need another Home Counties singer-songwriter. Ezra stood out by crafting escapist breezy pop, rather than joining his peers' dreary contest to see who could be the most earnest. Many would still struggle to pick Ezra out in a line-up, but undeniable bangers such as Shotgun led him to headline stadiums, and the first half of Ezra's third album has the same winning catchiness: don't be surprised if Manila and the self-satirising title track also attain radio ubiquity. Unfortunately, the second side is dominated by the moon-faced balladry Ezra usually rises above. Love Somebody Else has a classy Hall & Oates-y sheen, but it's surrounded by winsome platitudes. A solid bronze, rather than gold standard. *John Earls*

Liam Gallagher
C'mon You Know
★★★
Warners 0190296423932 (CD, LP)
He is the resurrection

Gallagher Jnr's third solo album adds some self-proclaimed "weird shit" to the square meal rock'n'roll that has helped him, to everyone's surprise, outstrip his big brother. Everything is relative – he hasn't pivoted to drill music – but there is the odd curveball: reflective opener More Power, with its children's choir, sounds like The Flaming Lips covering You Can't Always Get What You Want; Vampire Weekend's Ezra Koenig co-writes the noirish Moscow Rules; The Beatles' influences are more psychedelic than ever on It Was Not Meant to Be and Better Days (essentially Tomorrow Never Knows). Otherwise, it's as you were (sorry) with sweet ballads (Too Good For Giving Up) and polished rock (Everything's Electric) that will fit in nicely between Oasis classics at Liam's Knebworth second coming. *Shaun Curran*

Heldon
Antelast
★★★★
Bam Balam BBRP 091 (CD, LP)
Avant-rockers going out with a bang

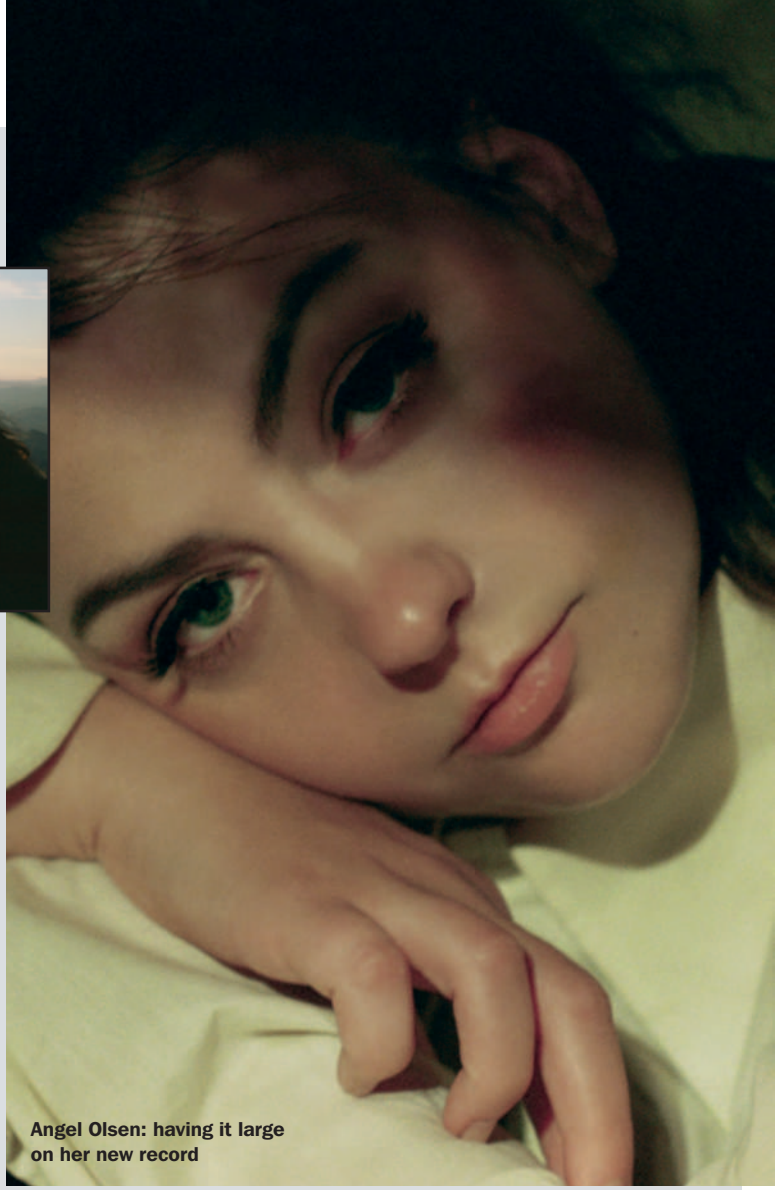
Heldon's initial run occurred in the 70s. Listening to those recordings today, the French group's freewheeling mixture of distorted guitar licks, weighty synth wobbles and lively drumbeats still sounds futuristic. Their leader, Richard Pinhas, is now in his seventies. Although he keeps threatening to wind things down, both archive releases and fresh material keeps on coming. Recorded live in 2019 with younger members Arthur Narcy and Florian Tatard, *Antelast* will be Heldon's final transmission… unless it isn't. Divided into five movements, the set is often propelled frantically by its energetic and hard-hitting rhythm section, as Pinhas riffs, noodles and spiralises on top. Interspersed are mellower, breath-catching moments. But you never have to wait long before another blast-off. *JR Moores*

Hercules And Love Affair
In Amber
★★★
Skint/BMG 4050538788365 (CD, 2LP)
Dance musician reunites with Anohni and goes goth

On his alias' self-titled 2008 debut, New York DJ Andy Butler offered one of the decade's most celebrated dance singles: the ferocious Blind, featuring Anohni. Reunited on the first Hercules And Love Affair album in five years, the pair have a whole new vibe. Contempt For You has the unsettling fury of Associates' darker moments, a mood continued in the tracks Butler sings, in a goth rumble recently echoed in Fontaines D.C. Handbag house it most definitely isn't, with Banshees/Creatures drummer Budgie enhancing the melodramatic rhythms. The intensity of Butler's rage, and his innate way with a beat, keep the songs from becoming too histrionic, sometimes colliding with industrial rock so that the pacy Christian Prayers is a thrilling Nine Inch Nails-alike. *John Earls*

Divine Perfection

US singer-songwriter's sixth studio album raises the bar. ***By Jamie Atkins***



Angel Olsen: having it large on her new record

Angel Olsen

Big Time

★★★★

Jagjaguwar JAG 424 CD (CD, 2LP, Cassette

Angel Olsen described her last album proper, 2019's *All Mirrors*, as an "angry record". Steeped in icy synthesisers and spectral strings and set to cold drum machines, it had a seething drama matched by the turbulence and frustration of the lyrics. *Big Time* finds the St Louis-raised singer-songwriter perform an about-turn to deliver a set informed by lush country and hushed folk with lyrics that veer between self-acceptance, grief, emotional exhaustion and optimism.

The songs on *Big Time* deal with the fall-out from a period in Olsen's personal life that left her reeling. After a period of coming to terms with her sexuality, she finally came out to her parents. "Finally, at the ripe old age of 34, I was free to be me," she writes in *Big Time*'s press release. But any feeling of relief was short-lived – her father died three days later. Two weeks after the funeral, her mother was admitted to the ER and didn't return. Just three weeks after her mother's service, Olsen spent a month in Topanga Canyon recording *Big Time* with producer Jonathan Wilson.

"I can't say that I'm sorry/When I don't feel so wrong anymore," begins opener All The Good Times, a slow-burning country-soul gem flecked with Stax horns and heartbroken-sounding pedal steel. It's a strong opener sung with controlled power. The title track is another tip of the hat towards Nashville, a weepy waltz giddy with new love.

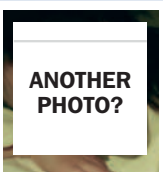
The eerie beauty of Dream Thing appears to find Olsen reflecting on past relationships in the light of her recent experiences, set to a shimmering and melodramatic musical backing that would've done Roy Orbison proud. The defiant Ghost On follows ("I can't fit into the past you're used to/I refuse to"), another suggestion that Olsen found comfort in classic country during hard times.

The string-soaked survival ballad All The Flowers showcases Olsen's dramatic vocal range: think Karen Dalton backed by *Fantasia* strings and you're some of the way there. It's followed by the show-stopping Right Now, a swooning country power ballad that improbably takes a turn into psych-Beatles territory, all heavy descending strings.

This Is How It Works is another countrified gem that finds Olsen mining uncanny beauty from emotional exhaustion. "I'm so tired of being tired," she sings. You believe her.

There's conviction, too, in the plain-speaking Go Home. Olsen belts out the stirring chorus with the desperation of somebody helpless in the tumult of tragedy: "I wanna go home/Go back to small things/I don't belong here/Nobody knows me."

Elsewhere, Walk Through The Fire is such an exquisitely doomy-sounding torch song that presumably David Lynch is writing a film about it as we speak. And Chasing The Sun is a stunning way for *Big Time* to finish, its lovestruck and content lyrics ("I can't seem to get anything done with someone like you around/Everyone's wonderin' where I've gone – having too much fun") set to sumptuously sad music to bittersweet effect, like Olsen's very own Somewhere Over The Rainbow.



Q&A

Angel Olsen on mining the emotional depths on her startling new record.

In Dream Thing you refer to a "waste of fear." Did the events of your personal life inspire a creative fearlessness when it came to the making of *Big Time*?
I'm not really sure, but when I say "waste of fear" in the song – I'm referring to someone spending too long a time holding a grudge, out of fear, out of ego.

***Big Time* feels like a warm, soulful record. Did you purposely set out to make it sound so different to *All Mirrors*?**
I guess everything I make is a little different from the previous release. I'm usually trying new things because it's what inspires me for a time. I listened to a lot of 70s country and rock during the pandemic. When I went to look for producers, I thought someone who would understand the minimalism needed for these songs, someone who'd just let them be what they are might be best. Might be the most radical thing I could do.

Were there any albums that were especially influential on the sound of *Big Time*?
Neil Young's *On The Beach*, Fleetwood Mac always, Dolly Parton just because I'm a woman, Dusty Springfield, Big Star, Lucinda Williams.

It feels like there's a lot of reflection on past relationships, personal and professional – All The Good Times, Dream Thing etc. Have you found the clarity you needed to address sensitive subjects in song?
Yes and no – people are weird! But I have found peace with those circumstances without needing clarity from someone else.

Chasing The Sun ends things on a lyrically hopeful note but the music feels exquisitely sad. Do you enjoy that sort of juxtaposition?
Well, when you're falling in love in a real way, I think you kind of feel open, or a little sad at the thought of losing the feeling if you want it so much. I think the same thing can happen with a lot of old country songs: you listen to them at first and they sound upbeat until you hear the words sometimes. And they're a little funny. Kinda like when you've been so sad you've actually learned how to laugh more when you retell your story. Comedians are some of the saddest people. You have to endure a lot to laugh that much. Any time something bad happens to me I like to say, "I'm just learning how to laugh deeper." *As told to Jamie Atkins*

Horsegirl

Versions Of Modern Performance

Matador OLE 1846 LPE 2 (CD, LP)

★★★★

Thrilling debut from the Windy City trio

The first breakout group of Chicago's thriving underage DIY scene, Horsegirl are barely out of school but belie their young years on *Versions Of Modern Performance*, a layered, atmospheric, darkly playful headrush of a first offering. Their basement-dwelling writing process adds a scuzziness to the strong post-punk/early 90s US alt-rock vibe (see the buzzing riff of Anti-Glory) but it's the guitar soundscapes and pop harmonies a la My Bloody Valentine and Stereolab that elevate tracks such as Billy and World Of Pots And Pans into something truly special. Add in some idiosyncratic, impressionistic, at times surreal lyrical character studies that take in themes of friendship and youthful lust, often set to an imagined life in the suburbs, and you'll do well to hear a better guitar-based debut all year. *Shaun Curran*

Interpol
The Other Side Of Make-Believe
Matador OLE 1875 LP (CD, LP)
★★★
New York trio let in a little light

For 20 years, NYC's Interpol have searched for ways to alter the shade of their monochromatic, elegiac rock: a dignified, if not always successful pursuit. This lightly envelope-pushing seventh album finds that elusive new sweet spot in bringing to the fore a somewhat alien concept: hope. With the help of super producer Flood, the band used lockdown distance to change up their jam-the-songs-out approach, letting some light through the cracks. Daniel Kessler's guitar lines remain inventively distinctive, but a gentleness now exudes from Paul Banks' voice, and his pseudo-absurdist lyrics consider that things might not be so bad after all. It plays into the music: anthemic highlights Fables and Passenger have a stately, optimistic air. "Still in shape, my methods refined," goes opener Toni, and how true it proves. *Shaun Curran*

Leyla McCalla
Breaking The Thermometer
★★★★
ANTI- 279121 (CD, LP)
Americana mainstay honours Haitian rebel folk

Mixing archival recordings with fertile, shape-shifting original songs and compositions, this exploratory album from Haitian-American cellist and multi-instrumentalist Leyla McCalla aims a spotlight on the radical Radio Haiti. A university commission compelled the former Carolina Chocolate Drop and Our Native Daughters player to dig deep into the independent station's archives from 1957-2003; there, McCalla finds the impetus for bracingly enriched story-songs of resistance and resilience, spirit and selfhood. Creole folk rubs shoulders with vibrant melodies, insistent rhythms and political laments, nurtured to fruition between McCalla's research and her reflections on her own identity. With brisk protest song Dodinin, the lovely Dan Reken and the lilting Pouki among the standouts, the result is a haunting, heartfelt immersion in Haitian history, fully invested and alive with poignancy and power. *Kevin Harley*

Delbert McClinton
Outdated Emotion
★★★★
Hot Shot HSR 0031 (CD, LP)
Back to the future, Lone Star-style

This Americana lark is second nature to grizzled Texan McClinton. Now in his early 80s, he recently retired from touring and this 16-track collection reconnects him to the songs that inspired him as a teen. Kicking off with Lloyd Price's Stagger Lee, he works his way through an alternative American Songbook, and the result will delight anyone whose path he's crossed over the years. Whether intoning over honky-tonk piano for Amos Milburn's One Scotch, One Bourbon, One Beer or frolicking with fiddles on Hank Williams' Jambalaya, McClinton proves his talents endure. By the time he closes with the brief, humorous Call Me A Cab – "I can't listen to this shit any more," he groans – you wish he'd start all over again. *Michael Heatley*

Van Morrison
What's It Gonna Take?
★★
Exile/Virgin 4549777 (CD, 2LP)
Still Van the Manifesto...

According to track 12 of 15, Van Morrison, "Ain't no celebrity... and I don't care if you agree." You'd think maybe he's trying to put controversy to bed, given recent conspiracy theory headlines – but if you reach that point, you've already consumed an entire manifesto. He takes issue with his detractors from the start, the one-chord organ-fuelled groove of Dangerous underpinning self-justifying lyrics. Track two, What's It Gonna Take, swings at politicians; Fighting Back Is The New Normal derides "fence sitters". This once elegantly enigmatic lyricist has become the ranting uncle in the corner.

Much of the music here is sumptuous R&B, but if Van is intent on exercising his right to freedom of speech he may find many choosing to tune out. *Michael Heatley*

Graham Nash
Live
★★★★
Proper Records PRPCD 161 (CD, LP)
Solo, and proud of it

Not just a live set, this 21-track release is a celebration of Nash's 50 years as a solo artist (a career often rudely interrupted by CSNY's own erratic path). Here, Nash plays his first two albums, 1971's *Songs For Beginners* and *Wild Tales* (1973), in their entirety on a 2019 tour not only with his usual crew – guitarist Shane Fontayne and former CSN keyboard player Todd Caldwell – but with pedal steel, sax and backing singers.

Some songs, notably a bunch from his debut, are favourites Nash has continued to play regularly – Simple Man, Military Madness, I Used To Be A King, Chicago – while others are less performed; some, apparently, not at all. The sound is warm and rich and Nash's plaintive vocals soar above everything loud and clear. *Nick Dalton*

Klaus Schulze
Deus Arrakis
★★★★
SPV 16246151886922461514 (CD, 3LP)
***Dune*-inspired brilliance from late musician**

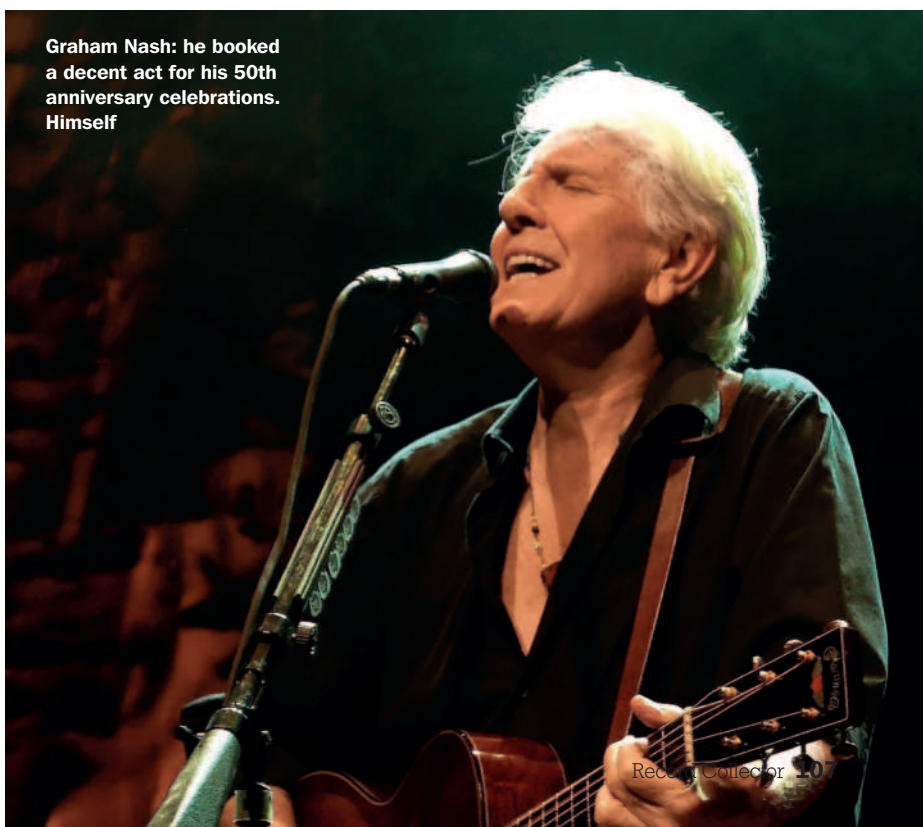
Klaus Schulze's recent death was unexpected, and if *Deus Arrakis* turns out to be his swansong – which is likely – then it's a fitting conclusion to a remarkable career, bringing things full circle. This is a sequel to the imaginary soundtrack to *Dune* that the German electronic pioneer made back in 1979, where he enlisted Arthur "The God of Hellfire" Brown to sing operatic glossolalia, was one of his masterpieces, and four decades later, Hans Zimmer asked Schulze to make a cameo on his own Academy Award-winning score. Inspired, Schulze rolled back the decades and recorded this companion piece: *Deus Arrakis* is as ambient and abstract as much of the kosmische legend's work, creating more an ethereal mood than a narrative which, given his sad passing, becomes a kind of ceremonial synth sepulture. *Jeremy Allen*

John Scofield
John Scofield
★★★
ECM 2727 (CD)
Veteran jazz guitarist goes it alone

With its acerbic tone and bluesy, bittersweet inflections, Scofield's fretboard sound is instantly recognisable and over the last 50 years has been heard in myriad different musical contexts, from spacey avant-jazz to riotous jam band funk and every style in between. This new album is the 70-year-old's first dedicated solo guitar record of his career and truly captures the essence of his unique approach to his instrument. The album's material – veering from jazz standards (It Could Happen To You) and traditional songs (Danny Boy) to ear-catching versions of Buddy Holly's Not Fade Away and Hank Williams' You Win Again – reflects the Ohio-born musician's eclectic array of influences. Impressive, too, are several striking self-penned tunes, which range from the hard-swinging, bop-tinged Elder Dance to the gentle Mrs Scofield's Waltz. A satisfyingly intimate encounter. *Charles Waring*

Shearwater
The Great Awakening
★★★★
Polyborus PLBR 001 (CD, 2LP)
Artful birder's still waters run deep

After books about birds, Bowie tributes, Bandcamp releases and Brian Eno collaborations, Shearwater's deep, dreamy comeback album *The Great Awakening* marks a homecoming for mainman Jonathan Meiburg. Certainly, it cleaves closer to the serene conceptual naturalism of Meiburg's 2006-10 'island trilogy' than the protest prog of Shearwater's last album, 2016's *Jet Plane And Oxbow*. Inspired by Meiburg's South American travels and lockdown, it's an album of expansive reach and intimate ruminations, where field recordings – monkeys, toucans – accompany songs of hope and dread, isolation and connection. Late Scott Walker and Talk Talk are doleful touchpoints for Highgate and the controlled drama of Xenarthran. From brawn to beauty, the buff Empty Orchestra and Radiohead-ish Aqaba offer twin peaks of bruised resilience and reflection. The result is an exquisitely textured album of radiant hymnals and restorative eco-lullabies, sculpted for modern trials. And, for Meiburg, a welcome and artistic reawakening. *Kevin Harley*



Graham Nash: he booked a decent act for his 50th anniversary celebrations. Himself

Wild Horses

Indie veterans mark their sixth album with their most escapist music yet. *By John Earls*

Foals: equestrian time

Foals

Life Is Yours

★★★★

Warner 0190296274435 (CD, LP/2LP)

Arriving at the tail-end of the era when indie bands could infiltrate the Top 40 singles chart, Foals were initially unlikely contenders for the mainstream. Emerging from the highbrow math-rock scene, the Oxford quintet at least played wild and celebratory gigs to enhance the more tuneful aspects of 2008's fidgety debut album *Antidotes*, which is reissued on recycled vinyl on the same day as *Life Is Yours*. Ever since, Foals have kept the intricate musicianship, but utilised it in search of the ultimate smart funk workout.

That hasn't always worked: despite the title track's phenomenal groove, much of 2015's self-conscious *What Went Down* was like George Michael with a 2:2 in sports science. Having explored all their styles on 2019's enjoyably sprawling two-part epic *Everything Not Saved Will Be Lost*, the band – now down to a trio after keyboardist Edwin Congreave left during early album sessions to take a post-grad economics degree – have settled on what seems the ideal path. Forget growing old gracefully, Foals' sixth record is up for it and chasing the simple pleasures.

Despite working with a team of producers for the first time, Foals' sound is at its most cohesive since punchy third album *Holy Fire*. Although recording began during the winter lockdown of 2020, the trio encapsulate escapist yearning brilliantly, whether for chaotic nights out on 2am or for summer travels in 2001, whose abandoned party mood earns the joyful outro its own interlude track as (Summer Sky). Yannis Phillippakis' singing is richer than ever, duetting with himself in dazzling fashion on The Sound, where his falsetto and gruffer register do battle on a visceral guitar pop assault. Throughout, Jimmy Smith's choppy guitars keep Philippakis' vocals taut, equal parts Ze Records tight funk and imperious Talking Heads pop. Although he still doesn't have a full-time bassist to bounce off since Walter Gervers' departure in 2018, Jack Bevan's fluid drumming is adept, a powerhouse storm on the title track and enticingly disco on Flutter. Only the routine thud of Getting High fails among the euphoria elsewhere, with lead single Wake Me Up matched by the closing Wild Green for a fantastic example of a band still out to cut loose, when most of their peers have entered the reflective and thoughtful stage of their career.

Although their intense image is of a band who are never satisfied, always yearning for the next step up, Foals deserve to bask in accomplishing their most complete and exciting album. After 15 years, that's a rare achievement.

Q&A

Guitarist Jimmy Smith on the influence of Weezer and kingfishers on Foals' new album.

Did you know when you began *Life Is Yours* that you'd make such an escapist album?
It's one of the first times we've truly achieved what we'd set out to. I vividly remember sitting around with our drummer, Jack [*Bevan*], in September 2020, talking about Weezer's *Blue Album*: how it's so escapist as it's its own little world, of a 10-song pop/rock package. We wanted something simpler that, once you get to the end, you maybe immediately want to let it roll again.

How easy was it to achieve that aim in reality?
With four different producers, there was a lot of noise going on. John Hill was like the executive producer, overseeing things, and he did a great job of stripping stuff out. That was mostly my fault, as I was putting arpeggios over everything.

Why did you use a team of producers for the first time?
It wasn't calculated, we were just indulging ourselves with people we'd always wanted to work with. We'd discussed John having that executive role and we loved working with Dan Carey. Miles James is less well-known, but we wanted him for the meticulous way he approaches drums. Miles and Jack were tuning drums for hours and hours. AK Paul was on our hitlist as part of the mysterious Paul brothers with Jai Paul. That guy is a magician.

What was it like recording at Real World during lockdown?
We've recorded in a few fancy studios, but it's really special there. There's nowhere else where you can record looking at wildlife. We bubbled ourselves off during Covid and Real World was a welcome distraction. It can be easy to overthink what you're doing, and looking at a family of kingfishers meant I wasn't craning my head over to look at my fretboard. It added a lightness to everything.

Any plans for more soundtrack work after Neptune was reworked with Hans Zimmer for Brian Cox's BBC2 series *Universe*?
Foals is full-on and it'd be hard to juggle the two, but I'd absolutely be interested. Me and Yannis [*Philippakis, Foals frontman*] have so much music sitting in the archives. There's a lot of ambient stuff waiting for the right offer.

***Antidotes* is reissued on vinyl with *Life Is Yours*. How do you view the album 14 years on?**
People still seem to cherish it, as do we, as it's our first child. It's the album we laboured over the most, and I love it. It's aged really well.
I can't believe it's that long ago. Being in New York with Dave Sitek producing, that was a "My God!" experience. *As told to John Earls.*

Working Men's Club: a labour of love, despite what it looks like

Katie Spencer
The Edge Of The Land
★★★★
Lightship Records LR 001 CD (CD, LP)
Yorkshire singer-songwriter's ace second

The influence of the natural and built environment runs deeply through Katie Spencer's album. Recorded live in the studio in just two days, the highly impressive result sees Spencer's thoughtful songwriting complemented by consistently excellent musicianship, as evidenced on the reflective opener, Take Your Time. Elsewhere, the landscape's recurrent presence appears on excellent songs such as the evocative title track, Silence On The Hillside and Shannon Road. The latter track typifies the album's quality; imaginative imagery supported by compelling music that summons up the best of early 70s folk, fluently delivered here with its own contemporary power. This is a fine collection of memorable songs by an outstanding writer and musician. *Steve Burniston*

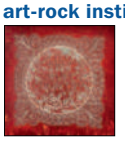
Jimi Tenor
Multiversum
★★★
Bureau B BB401 (LP, CD)
Improbable crossovers from Finland's electro-jazz beatmaker

Clearly, lockdown did little to restrain Jimi Tenor, whose work increasingly seems to operate outside of time and space. Worlds don't so much collide as melt into each other on *Multiversum*, on which a song called Uncharted Waters finds Tenor intoning the lyric "Highway empty, open wide", the implication of deep-sea driving saying everything about the improbable realms this Finnish electro-jazz polymath creates. The four-to-the-floor kick beneath Baby Free Spirit recalls his early 90s beat-making, while Bass Kalimba Dance takes a bare-bones swing at the borderless approach to rhythms that defined 2020's *Aulos*. Whether flaunting his flautism (Monday Blue) or pulling one of his periodic Gary Wilson seductions (Birthday Magic), Tenor never misses a trick as he upends his kit bag and lets the contents spill across the floor. *Jason Draper*

The Wave Pictures
When The Purple Emperor Spreads His Wings
★★★
Moshi Moshi MOSHILP 117 (2LP, CD)
Endearingly eccentric and often emotional

Forever on the cusp of a breakthrough, The Wave Pictures return with *When The Purple Emperor Spreads His Wings*, an ambitious double-album with each side devoted to a season. Leader David Tattersall wrote a song a day during lockdown, and the album showcases the breadth of the Loughborough trio's talents, from the sincere (the floating, acoustic River Of Gold) to the silly (the glam-stomping Hazel Irvine). Back In the City is so Velvets you think you've just found an outtake from *Loaded*. With the passing of Pat Fish, *When The Purple Emperor Spreads His Wings* has that Jazz Butcher outsiderdom shuffle – frequently irresistible, sometimes a trifle glib. If this writer was 17, he would think this the greatest album ever; 40 years on, he still thinks it's pretty good. *Daryl Easlea*

Wilco
Cruel Country
★★★★
dBpm Records 051497337483 (2CD, 2LP)
Unexpected double from art-rock institution



The way frontman Jeff Tweedy tells it, *Cruel Country* is Wilco's take on country music, inspired by a collective urge to play the music that felt the most like communion after the six-piece's pandemic-enforced break. The songs that emerged suggested a narrative to Tweedy that loosely paralleled the story of the United States, or at least evoked the singer's feeling about his birthplace. Hence the double entendre of a title. They have reconnected with the direct, rootsy sound of their early years, but there's always a twist – off-kilter percussion from the staggering Glenn Kotche; guitarist Nels Clines' mini firework displays of solos; Tweedy's idiosyncratic lyrics. And for all of the more straightforward-sounding country-ish tunes, there are so many side-steps: the way the somnambulant psych of The Empty Condor staggers into life; the existential awe of The Universe; the Dead-like cosmic jam, Many Worlds. It makes for a marvellous and consistent outpouring of creativity. *Jamie Atkins*

Working Men's Club
Fear Fear
★★★
Heavenly HVNLP 203 (CD, LP)
More twisted TV themes in waiting

This Todmorden collective's breakthrough single Teeth was an insistent slice of Underworld-style dark dance that became the theme to BBC2's murderous comedy drama *Guilt*. They're in no rush to change the formula on album two. Leader Syd Minsky-Sargeant claims *Fear Fear* is less minimal, but his band still excel at hypnotic repetition. New Order remain an obvious touchstone, but there's a more Kraftwerk feel this time, especially on the childlike "What does this button do?" mood of Plays. A gleefully macabre world, again full of would-be TV idents. *John Earls*

Katie Spencer: the Yorkshire artist has made a startling second

Photo (Katie Spencer): Luke Hallett

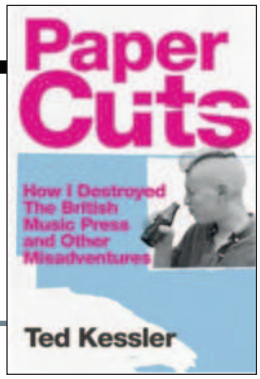
NEXT MONTH

Rolling Stones Jamie T
Black Midi George Michael
Lou Reed Madonna

Books

Stop The Press!

Former Q editor's entertaining memoir looks over life on the music mag frontlines. *By Jamie Atkins*



Ted Kessler: the ex-Q editor spills the beans

Paper Cuts: How I Destroyed The British Music Press And Other Misadventures

Ted Kessler

★★★★

White Rabbit, £18.99

ISBN 9781474625531, 320 pages

The decision by publisher Bauer to close down *Q* magazine in early 2020 signalled the end of an era in music. At its peak, *Q* was selling quarter-of-a-million copies a month and, once the weeklies disappeared from newsagents' shelves, was the only major magazine focused on contemporary rock and pop. With *Q* gone, where would today's talent be given a soapbox to shout from? Who would be there to shape tomorrow's stars with praise, criticism, and irreverence? Who would have the budget and expertise to photograph them, to make tomorrow's icons?

Ted Kessler – the editor of *Q* for its final four years and *NME* writer during its mid-90s boom and post-millennial slump – is ideally placed to tell us how it happened, how music magazines lost their way once the tone-deaf, blue sky thinking of marketing bods was valued over the passionate and informed ideas of experienced staff members.

That's not to say this is a bitter airing of grievances of a memoir. Kessler gives an even-handed, down-to-earth, and often hilarious account of the decline of the music press while bestowing gems of worldly wisdom to readers along the way. There's anecdotal gold from encounters with some of the most intriguing musical figures of our times (Kevin Rowland, Mark E Smith, Richard James, Shaun Ryder, Billy Childish) and the genius of former colleagues (David Cavanagh, Steven Wells) is celebrated in an unsentimental and generous way. But this is no misty-eyed nostalgia fest – *Paper Cuts*' epilogue is effectively a rallying call for future generations to document music and culture and Kessler is outspoken when it comes to the narrow focus of mainstream music mags in their heyday.

Still, if *Paper Cuts* was solely concerned with the world of music journalism it'd be a thoroughly enjoyable read with fairly niche appeal. Kessler's vivid and unflinchingly honest account of his formative years add a dimension that makes *Paper Cuts* essential reading. Episodes from his teenage years in Paris read like the treatment for a new wave coming of age film (think *We Are The Best* fuelled by crème de cassis) and on returning to a London of dead-end jobs and intoxicating nightlife he very nearly loses his way.

What saves him, and underpins everything here, is a love for music and all that comes with it. Kessler's passion provided an outlet for his writing talent – without it, there's a sense that he might have remained directionless. *Paper Cuts* is a deftly told, hugely entertaining and timely reminder of how culture can help people understand themselves and realise their potential.

Q&A

Ted Kessler on precocious readers, the relationship between fear and memory, and the downfall of print.

What's it like knowing that your personal life is about to become public?

I don't find that uncomfortable. But I do have thoughts about what some people mentioned in it will think of it. But then again, I don't really give a fuck. It's my story. I've not made anything up. I don't think there's anything too dramatic in there. I own all my own behaviours. The only people I'm worried about reading the book are my two children. One of them's a really voracious reader and I know that when the book turns up, he'll start reading it, even though he's only nine.

Those recollections of your teenage experiences in Paris are so vivid. Do you keep diaries?

No, I don't keep diaries… I wish I had. When you're a teenager, stuff has a lot more impact and I can remember details vividly. I think it might be a family quirk because both of my brothers can remember stuff really well, too. I can remember conversations I had when I was 15/16. When you're fearful, you do remember stuff very clearly. It was an era – I think London was not dissimilar to Paris – when you could get beaten up quite easily for the way you looked.

Did you consciously set out to demystify music journalism?

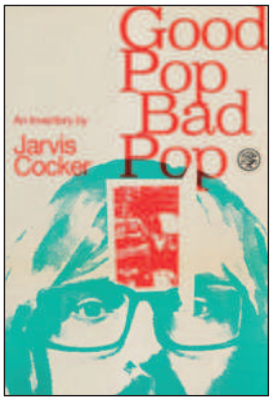
I'm just trying to be honest, because my memory of it is just a collection of misfits who couldn't really exist anywhere else. I found it a place that was welcoming to people like that.

Where music magazines kind of went wrong was when they became more run by marketeers, and people who are interested in careers. They could've navigated the downfall of print a little bit better by leaving it in the hands of idiots, rather than professionals.

How did you decide which encounters with musicians to include?

I went for the ones where the background stories are, in some way, interesting. When I went back and read some of the features, I thought, well, I don't want to just retell an old *NME* or *Q* piece. There's a lot of writing that I'm very proud of, but I haven't retold those stories because they were fine as they were. I wanted to tell the backstage stuff – there was a lot of chaos around Oasis in the early days but interviewing them in 1997 just wasn't as interesting. Turning up at a photo studio and getting an hour-and-a-half with them, there's no backstory to that.

As told to Jamie Atkins



Good Pop, Bad Pop

Jarvis Cocker

★★★★

Jonathan Cape, £20

ISBN 9781787330566, 368 pages

Trash in the attic? Jarvis doesn't think so…

Forced to sit amid the accumulated clutter of our lives, many of us were inspired during lockdown to get rid of anything that wasn't deemed essential – a miniature book of rub-on tattoos, say, or a solo cufflink missing its counterpart, a ticket to a John Peel Roadshow; the bric-a-brac that once felt essential but which now only seems to signify the distance between the life we lived then and the person we believe we have become. For Jarvis Cocker, whose attention to the little details is what gives his songs their universal appeal, these are the very objects we should revere – the ones that set us on a different course and, in Cocker's case, inspired such formative Pulp songs as Little Girl (With Blue Eyes), the Sheffield wonk-poppers' non-album single from 1985. Rather than give away all the secrets – he's careful about that – Cocker uses his own loft clearance as the jumping-off point for *Good Pop, Bad Pop* and, like a pop-culture Proust, charts his creative awakening against an array of items, including an early manifesto scrawled in a school notebook when he was still a teenager ("The group shall work its way into the public eye by producing fairly conventional, yet slightly off-beat, pop songs", it reads – mission accomplished). It's a measure of the man that he remained firmly committed to his course against well over a decade of setbacks, and a testament to just how rich this junk is that Cocker can weave such a compelling tale that stops well before Pulp find fame.

Jason Draper

Miles Davis Kind Of Blue: Modern Jazz's Holy Grail

Brian Morton

★★★★

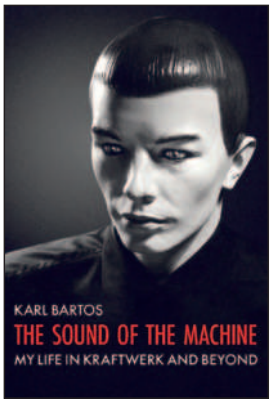
Jazz Images, £12.99

ISBN9788409344567, 92 pages

Post-mortem of a jazz classic

Kind Of Blue is a quintessential example of jazz's magic-created-in-the-moment aesthetic; when five musicians gathered in a recording studio with little idea of what they were going to play but ended up spontaneously composing a masterpiece for the ages. "I don't think anybody ever thought it was going to turn out like it did," drummer Jimmy Cobb told *RC* in 2008, adding with a laugh: "I know if Miles had thought it was going to be anything special he'd have asked for a ton of money that day." Understandably, *Kind Of Blue* has been written about more than any other jazz album and for those that don't want to get lost in the labyrinthine ruminations of Richard Williams, say, or the forensic archaeology of Ashley Kahn, then Morton's book – conveniently packaged with a CD of the album – is a godsend; short but no less profound and is replete with erudition and insight. Controversially, Morton, while admiring its beauty, states that "*Kind Of Blue* is not a great album"; a perspective based on his belief that a great album, traditionally, is something that is greater than the sum of its parts. That, he says, is not the case with Miles Davis' magnum opus. He argues his points persuasively. A fascinating read.

Charles Waring



The Sound of the Machine

Karl Bartos

★★★★

Omnibus Press, 608 pages

ISBN 9781913172640, £20

Full and frank disclosure of life in the world's most influential electronic band

The last time an auxiliary member of the classic Kraftwerk lineup tried to publish an autobiography, Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider got litigious. Wolfgang Flür's bawdy 2000 account of life in the seismically important electronic outfit was returned to shelves for a second edition with a number of redactions. Karl Bartos' enjoyable tome – ably translated by Katy Derbyshire – is more refined, understandably more risk-averse and fastidiously more detailed. If you're interested in what microphones were used on each track or how the Synthanorma sequencer changed everything, then this is the book for you. Bartos also delves into his concomitant career as a classically trained percussionist, noting that he was in the orchestra pit of the Deutsche Oper Am Rhein playing Prokoviev's The Tale of The Stone Flower the night the Sex Pistols first played Manchester Free Trade Hall. As Kraftwerk becomes more successful, Bartos is forced to choose, and opts to work exclusively for Hütter and Schneider despite financial precarity, with his published musical contributions never enough to put him on an equal footing. Last man standing Hütter is described variously as "uptight" and "calculating", and the image of a sports-obsessed entrepreneur reading *L'equipe* while massaging his own oiled legs is an abiding one. *Jeremy Allen*

Turned Inside Out: The Official Story Of Obituary

David E Gehlke

★★★★

Decibel Books, £24

ISBN 9798886276657, 312 pages

Extensive biography of death metal icons

With expansive books on Noise Records and Paradise Lost to his name, David E Gehlke now turns his attention to Florida's death metal icons Obituary. Founded by brothers John and Donald Tardy (vocals and drums respectively) and guitarist Trevor Perez, the trio took invaluable guidance from local heroes Nasty Savage, and together with lead guitarist Jerry Tidwell and bassist Jerome Grable unveiled Executioner, as they were first known, in January 1985. They were all still at high school. Since then, Obituary's founding trio have seen numerous lead guitarists and bassists come and go over the years while the band itself has developed into what Gehlke describes as "a family-run business that prides itself on a do-it-yourself work ethic." Gehlke is an intuitive and insightful narrator, and the book (whose title is drawn from a track on the band's 1990 *Cause Of Death* album) is a compelling history of the band – one of the most influential and respected death metal acts – from those tentative steps to the present day, and also examines the wider Tampa death metal scene, so vital to the sub-genre's development. An introduction by Max Cavalera (and a tangent on Donald Tardy's work with homeless cats in Florida) rounds off this extensive biography. *John Tucker*

The Islander: My Life in Music and Beyond

Chris Blackwell with Paul Morley

★★★★

Nine Eight Books, £20

ISBN 9781788707978, 400 pages

One man *is* an island

Depending upon where you alight on the career timeline of Island Records' charismatic head honcho, Chris Blackwell was the first Brit to fly the flag for reggae and brought Bob Marley to the masses, the prog fan who nurtured King Crimson and Emerson, Lake & Palmer, the diehard folkie who stuck by Fairport Convention, Richard & Linda Thompson and John Martyn when sales were nigh on non-existent, the maverick chancer who spotted the potential of left-fielders Roxy Music and The B-52's, or the savvy businessman who made U2 the biggest band on the planet.

All of the above are true, and recounted in colourful detail in this page-turner of an autobiography, yet in spite of his many remarkable achievements Blackwell comes across as a humble figure underplaying his role. Writing about the introspective Cat Stevens, he says, "Knowing when to leave them alone can be just as much a creative act as getting intimately involved," while astutely passing Stevens' Wild World on to Jimmy Cliff to score another big hit.

His instinctive talent for identifying groundbreaking artists serves him well, be it the theatricality of Grace Jones or Tom Waits' audacious gear shift towards the junkyard opera of *Swordfishtrombones*. "I always preferred to hunt around the margins," he writes, but arguably no other label boss ever had such an unerring knack for shepherding the marginal into the mainstream. *Terry Staunton*

Moonage Daydream: The Life And Times Of Ziggy Stardust

David Bowie and Mick Rock

★★★★

Genesis Publications, £45

ISBN 9781905662726, 346 pages

Reprint of the ultimate glam coffee table book

First published in 2002, *Moonage Daydream* is, to all intents and purposes, the closest Bowie ever came to writing an autobiography, albeit one with its focus firmly on a fictional conceit. Even in that form it follows less of a structured narrative and more a succession of scattergun reactions to the 600-plus images photographer Mick Rock took at the height of Ziggy stardom and the years immediately before and after.

Real life seeps into the story in charming ways, such as the hands-on building of a pre-tour rehearsal room ("[Tony] Visconti and [Mick] Ronson jumped into the project with both feet; I've never seen so much joy centred on a Black & Decker"), or prolonged sound-checks leaving support act Roxy Music little time for their own ("They were quite angry, I think, and understandably so"). There are occasional insights into the creation of his enigmatic alter ego and the effect it had on audiences, but rarely as highfalutin' examinations of its artiness and closer to the breezy conversational tone of a bloke in a pub.

In that respect, the book pulls of the neat trick of both celebrating the making of an enduring myth and casually disassembling it, with Bowie more than happy to grab a handful of curtain to give readers fascinating peaks at showbiz away from the spotlights. Rock's evocative pictures, either carefully staged or candid, would be enough to spin the yarn into gold, but it's the words of the creator of the icon that give a fuller account of how he became a special man, and why we were Ziggy's fans. *Terry Staunton*

Inside Number Three: An Illustrated History Of Apple Records

Nigel Pearce

★★★★

Inside No.3, 80 pages

ISBN TBC, £35

Illuminating trip inside The Beatles' label

As Beatle people were recently taken extensively inside No 3 Saville Row, thanks to Peter Jackson's *Get Back*, the reputation of Apple is in better stead than it has been for many years. So much has rightly been written about the label's demise, that few have stopped to celebrate what it actually achieved in its short lifespan, bearing in mind that it could never ever satisfactorily achieve its noble aims. Although *Inside Number Three* may not be an in-depth appraisal of the imprint, by sharing his extensive collection, broadcaster and lifelong admirer Nigel Pearce illustrates the ambition, scope and attention to detail that The Beatles demanded for their operation. As everyone who has ever picked up a copy of *RC* would agree, there is seldom something better than seeing a well-photographed spread of records and memorabilia, and *Inside Number Three* is brimming with them. Many of these artefacts have never been shared before, and many are scarce. From well-seen images such as Our First Four to the seldom viewed sleeve of APPLE 1, Maureen (That's Why The Lady Is A Champ) by Frank Sinatra, to Splinter's Apple acetate, this really is a beautifully photographed labour of love. *Daryl Easlea*

Lyrics

Bryan Ferry

★★★★★

Chatto & Windus, 312 pages

ISBN 978178474483-0, £20

The considerable thrill of it all

"The creative spirit moves in mysterious ways," Bryan Ferry surmises in the introduction to *Lyrics*. Twenty-seven when his recording career began, there are few ultra-gauche examples of "moon" and "June" here - if there were, they would firmly be within the inverted commas for ironic effect. Like Springsteen, Ferry's early work displayed a tendency to overwrite, soon to be replaced by a serene absence. Phrases are fastidiously pared down to accentuate meaning and poignancy. For example, "More than this/there's nothing" has a power that few could have appreciated back in 1982. It makes sense when Ferry talks about having John Donne's poems pinned to his wall as a teenager: seeing The Bob (Medley) written out, it could well be one of Donne's love sonnets. There is something arresting seeing Ferry's words laid out in black type on the white page. Often stylised on an album inner, the layout of *Lyrics* offers an elegant simplicity that allows these lines to breathe. James Truman writes in his foreword that, when he saw Roxy Music in New York in 2001, he found David Bowie sitting behind him singing every word of Mother Of Pearl. On the evidence here, one truly senses how Ferry was Bowie's only true UK competition in 1972/3; the lyrics of Do The Strand alone are possibly art rock's greatest triumph: "Rhododendron/is a nice flower", indeed. Ferry should be revered as Bowie is; and he's still with us. *Daryl Easlea*

Bickershaw Festival 50th Anniversary Edition

Chris Hewitt

★★★★

Ozit Morpheus, £35

ISBN 9780954931308, 208 pages

The festival that blew up a storm

Ah, the days when festivals weren't all about yurts and executive bar areas; Bickershaw – near Wigan – couldn't rival Woodstock with its 60,000 crowd but it put up a good show in the rain and mud stakes. Music, too, with the Grateful Dead's marathon headlining set. Author/compiler Chris Hewitt was part of it as a college-going teenager who helped promote the gathering (5-7 May 1972) for organiser Jeremy Beadle. Well before he was Game For A Laugh on TV, Beadle assembled a transatlantic dream, from The Kinks to Country Joe, Flamin' Groovies and Captain Beefheart. Hewitt is here as author and historian of north west music and this is a revamped and standalone edition of his book, formerly part of a box set. It's a work of love, from his in-depth overview to vast amounts of colourful photos (not least the terrifying scaffolding stage creation) and bleakly black and white cuttings from countless newspapers that can't quite decide whether it was disturbingly anarchic, all Hell's Angels and litter, or rather charming. The latter wins in an extraordinary scrapbook. *Nick Dalton*

Movies/DVDs

Nick Cave and Warren Ellis: navigating lockdown in a new film

Honest Living

Nick Cave and Warren Ellis reunite on poignant follow-up. *By Kevin Harley*

This Much I Know To Be True

★★★★★

Trafalgar Releasing (Cinemas, DVD, 105 mins)

When Nick Cave cancelled his proposed *Ghosteen* tour during lockdown, he made the brilliant solo performance film *Idiot Prayer* and turned to darker arts to compensate. Taking government advice about retraining, Cave embraced ceramics and became good at it, going by his latest documentary with director Andrew Dominik. But it's Cave's return to his true calling that dominates here, as he and wild-hearted wingman Warren Ellis rehearse songs from the *Ghoststeen* and *Carnage* records for a forthcoming tour.

Previously, Dominik documented a profound trauma in Cave's life with *One More Time With Feeling*, a film about the tragic death of Cave's 15-year-old son Arthur. If that piece was wrenching, *This Much I Know To Be True* majors in catharsis. While Arthur's memory undoubtedly lingers, the spectacle of Cave and Ellis diving deep into their shared songs of suffering and absolution invigorates and moves.

While it initially seems odd that Dominik shot a rehearsal performance rather than a concert, what emerges is a story of reconstitution, of an artist rebuilding himself after personal and public crises. There's warmth and humour, too, with a cameo from a frail but fiery Marianne Faithfull and some lively interview banter. Cave clearly trusts Dominik, enough to open up on subjects from happiness to fan interaction. Searching, affecting and often thrilling, *This Much I Know To Be True* shares its truths with a passion.

Q&A

Director Andrew Dominik on trust, intimacy and forward steps…

What was the starting point for the film?
With the pandemic, Nick did *Idiot Prayer*, and he and Warren made a record, but he was still bored. Nick called me and said, "I want to do a concert film that's about me and Warren." I didn't want to do it; the middle of a pandemic wasn't the best time to get on a plane and go shoot a movie. But I had another listen to *Ghosteen*, which I love, and I had to do it. That aside, I never arrive with a plan when I'm making films. It's exhilarating that way. You don't know what a film will be until you get there.

Why a rehearsal rather than concert film?
I tried to convince Nick to do a show of *Ghosteen* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and he was like [*wrinkles face*]. This was my chance to do that, in a way, and it would be better because there wouldn't be an audience. The great thing about that is it allows a different relationship with the songs. With a concert, the songs become performative. When Nick's just singing and I've got the camera there, he doesn't have to perform. The songs can be more intimate.

Warren says of Nick, "He's up for trying anything." Does Nick trust you to take risks?
Nick didn't trust me at first. He was completely controlling when we did *One More Time…* His attitude towards me was all over the road, from trust to distrust. But I cut together 20 minutes and after that he was like, "OK, it's great." Obviously that film was a dubious undertaking. It could've gone horribly wrong. It felt like we were one step away from the sixth stage of grief, which is exploitation. We were worried about doing Arthur a disservice. The film turned out happily in that it didn't feel that way. In that one, Nick's steps forward are tentative. When he talks about trying to be happy as an act of defiance, you don't really believe him. But in this film, you can see that the tragedy has been integrated into life and that life is beautiful.
As told to Kevin Harley

Pink Floyd
Pulse

★★★★

Pink Floyd Records PFR 39

Antique and curio, restored in HD

Pink Floyd serenely continue upgrading their catalogue with what was, for many years, their final word. *Pulse* was the moment Mk. 3 Floyd fully embraced the past and, in doing so, their leader David Gilmour wrested moral and spiritual ownership of the group from Roger Waters, who had departed eight years previously. Recorded live at Earl's Court in October 1994, *Pulse* effectively established the Pink Floyd heritage industry, showcasing that year's *The Division Bell*, the most Pink Floyd-sounding album since *Wish You Were Here* nearly two decades earlier, and presenting, as a piece, *The Dark Side Of The Moon,* complete with circular screen and updated films that the group had used since 1973. Like the flashing LED light that is now restored to the spine of the Blu Ray, the legacy of Floyd throbs gently away in the record collections and playlists of millions; glacial, dignified, the ire of Waters washed away in Gilmour's glistening patina of sound and vision. This revised edition of *Pulse* is restored beautifully in HD, the packaging (complete with batteries and instructions to maintain your spinelight a-flashing) absolutely essential for the coffee-table Floyd legions. Lovingly restored with concert back-drops, documentary footage and all, *Pulse* is the perfect introduction to late-period Pink Floyd.
Daryl Easlea

Police Around The World – Expanded And Updated

★★★★

Mercury Studios (DVD/CD, Blu-Ray/CD, DVD/LP)

Forty years on, fan-demanded reissue rocks

Such was the self-belief of The Police and manager Miles Copeland, drummer Stewart's brother, that the band's rise to rock superstardom in 1979 and 1980 was chronicled mile by mile, stage by stage, by an ever-present film crew. The original documentary which emerged two years later on VHS and Laserdisc has been belatedly restored and remastered, with complete performances of four songs a bonus. More interestingly, perhaps, we have 11 live audio tracks from Kyoto, Hammersmith and Hong Kong. All are first- or second-album cuts bar band-written B-side Visions Of The Night, and each crackles with the energy the trio brought to the global music scene.

Highpoints of the documentary include guitarist Andy Summers' sumo wrestling exploits, Sting exchanging spit with a French audience and insults traded in Arabic by the Copeland siblings. Depending on your level of fandom, these may be watched once and consigned to the shelf. Music-wise, the live footage is edited to fit, but it's the standalone audio disc that excites.

The discovery of what is effectively a new live album will be good news for old-time fans or Sting aficionados looking back in time. Certainly not punk, nor yet classic rock, this is power pop delivered with pizzazz. Call the cops!
Michael Heatley

Jeen-Yus: A Kanye Triology

★★

Netflix

Miss the old Kanye?

When Clarence 'Coodie' Simmons interviewed Kanye West in 2001, he sensed something special about the up-and-coming producer that needed to be captured. Coodie began documenting West's career, amassing hundreds of hours of camcorder footage as the beatmaker attempted to establish himself as a rapper. Two decades later, Coodie and filmmaker Chike Ozah have edited that raw and frequently revelatory footage into a near-five-hour-long documentary that will mostly delight fans but is unlikely to convert the already unimpressed.

Episode one focuses on West's struggle to be noticed. We see an eager-to-please West rapping along to All Falls Down to unimpressed label execs. Touching moments with his mother, Donda, are captured, emphasising his dependence on her advice and support.

Episode two tracks West's rise from a near fatal car accident to stardom. West is a low priority for his label, Roc-A-Fella, and resorts to blagging studio time to finish his debut, *The College Dropout*. West's drive and self-belief come to the fore as he hustles support (the scene in which he plays Through The Wire to Pharrell is a gem) and makes a classic against the odds.

The third act is a slog. Without access to West, Coodie's footage dries up and the extraordinary run of albums up to 2013's *Yeezus* is barely mentioned. Coodie's invited back around 2018 but the footage is at best bizarre and – somehow – mostly pretty dull, West surrounded by sycophants and clearly unwell.

Overall, *Jeen-Yus* is a frustrating watch. An absolute treasure trove of material hasn't been served well by the documentary makers, who have served up an unfocused and sentimental narrative lacking in insight. One day there will be a fascinating documentary about Kanye West. This isn't it. *Jamie Atkins*

Photo: Charlie Gray

Singles

Con Funk Shun/Jay Cee Move On Up/I've Been Thinking *Last Bastion LB 03*

Blimey, what a roster. Last month, we enjoyed Last Bastion's Steve Marriott release, now it brings us something totally different. You may remember Con Funk Shun as mega-selling, highly sampled 70s-80s groove giants. They still exist and in 2014 committed this genuinely remarkable makeover of Curtis Mayfield's call for self-betterment to tape. Move On Up surfs on a spanking electro-funk groove circa 1981; it's adorned with delicious harmonies, lush strings and horns, and to top the lot, zydeco accordion! A song you've probably heard enough of by now is totally refreshed, in a highly original manner. Organic electronica? Folk-electro-soul? I've never experienced the like: whatever it is, it's fabulous. As if that wasn't enough, the flip brings us soul DJ Jay Cee borrowing bits of Sam Fletcher's Northern monster I'd Think It Over to create a cool, ticking, rising and falling song of desire. It is contemporary, yet bears vintage echoes of the likes of Work Song and Johnny Lytle's Village Caller without aping either. Very limited edition: one side would be enough to make it worth snapping up; both are gorgeous.

The Bevis Frond Typical Freakout/You Best Beware *Hypnotic Bridge HYP 036*

Nick Saloman, the man who made Walthamstow whirl, offers his first single for three years, playing everything on it, like Hoe Street's answer to Prince. Typical Freakout has an American indie vibe, a bit grungy, a tad southern rock, though its tight atmosphere reeks of cramped London rooms, mould creeping in their corners. Saloman's fierce guitar slashes across the main riff, which is like half the intro of The Who's Circles, but it's kept caged: there's no wild solo as such because the song's the point. It's a representation of frustration: duff gigs, meaningless life lessons, ambitions thwarted, even outbreaks of rage seem merely routine. The riveting You Best Beware possesses that dark, minor key intimacy found on certain early 70s Britrock albums; *Benefit* and *No Alternative* spring to mind, though You Best Beware is far more direct, has fiercer lyrics, and the guitars are inflammatory. Nice touch of organ too, and we all like our organ nicely touched.

Gutsy, gritty, powerful stuff from an established talent lumbered with the tag "cult artist".

Johnny Marr Spirit Power & Soul (Vince Clarke Remix)/Human *BMG NVS 011*

Released for *RSD*, Vince Clarke's reboot of Johnny Marr's Spirit Power And Soul takes it up an ecstatic notch or several: smacking electro drums, music stripped to essentials, babbling Moroder bassline. The chorus now seems even bigger than it did on the fevered, dreamy original. This pink vinyl single is not enough: they should make an album together. Clarke may be the perfect foil for the modern Marr.

Surprise Chef Velodrome/Spring's Theme *Big Crown BC 123*

My former brother-in-law Ken could make a noise like the synth sound on Velodrome by blowing through pursed lips. It was impressive. So is Velodrome, a mellow, layered, subtle instrumental from Melbourne's Surprise Chef, which is like early 70s library music allied to a hip hop beat. Velodrome is too active a title; it made me dream of lying on a lilo in a lido. Flute, guitar, drums, Ken's resonant lips: it's all rather lovely, to misquote John Le Mesurier. On t'other side, you'd expect Spring's Theme to be all cast-off clothing, squabbling sparrows and sap rising, but it's a moody, dark affair, guitar like a clattering magpie, the air of an impending storm. You'd barely notice these tunes in the wrong setting, yet they're fascinating.

Buzzcocks Senses Out Of Control/Carnival Of Illusion; Hope Heaven Loves You *Cherry Red 10" CHERRY 528*

You can't see the join: Steve Diggle's Buzzcocks could only be this band. His Manchester drawl may not be as winningly vulnerable as Pete Shelley's but it still suits their dynamo rush. This 10" offers a cut from their upcoming album and two otherwise unissued gems. Carnival Of Illusion drills along, letting guitars fill its sky. Hope Heaven Loves You offers a zig-zagging riff and touching lyrics that wish Pete Shelley the affection in the afterlife that he deserved on earth, sigh. The lead track, Senses Out Of Control, resembles a *Spiral Scratch* outtake, but bigger. Remember that rubbery guitar thrash? The years roll back like an Asda promotion.

Article 58 Event To Come/Icon *Optic Nerve ON 404*

Teenage Scottish indie hopefuls Article 58 were proud rock'n'roll outsiders, naming themselves after an evil ruling by Uncle Joe Stalin which enabled him to terrorise "counter-revolutionaries". Article 58 played support slots to names we know, released a single, disintegrated. One member went on to numerous bands, another experienced fame with Altered Images and risked his sanity by producing Black Grape. Event To Come was their 45, issued in '81 on Rational, having narrowly failed to make the grade with Postcard. It's an appealing, bouncy thing, with nearly out-of-tune guitars clanging over a popping bassline and drums that reveal their exposure to that most addictive of vices: Northern soul. It's like the rhythm section are Jam fans while the singer is a cousin of Mark E Smith. Handclaps help push it along, and if enthusiasm over refinement is your thing, you'll love it. The previously unheard Icon is more Fall-like, a brittle ramble-shambles that spits, elbows and, er, shrugs mercilessly. It's a photo of a teenager, captured forever young.

Melvin Hicks & The Versatiles/Clarence Pinckney The Intruder/Just Outside Of Lonely *Kent Select CITY 078*

More "can't believe it's unreleased" soul from Kent. They dug this thrilling soul-funker from the collection of its writer, Billy Terrell, who handed the song to Asbury Park, New Jersey outfit Melvin Hicks & The Versatiles in 1970. It has the feel of Archie Bell's Tighten Up, but it's more urgent. Lyrically, it melds the mock-cop vibe of First Choice's Armed & Extremely Dangerous with The Rays' Silhouettes. And oh, what yummy harmonies! This is its debut on 45 but it's been tearing up rare soul dancefloors on acetate ripped from CD. The flip's moody ballad is edible, too, thanks to deep bass, wailing female vocals and an accomplished male lead whose fine voice never bust him out of Jersey. Broooce, where were ya when these homies needed a leg-up?!

Ministry/Peter Hook Dancing Madly Backwards/Dancing Madly Backwards *Cleopatra CLOLP 3181*

Two interpretations of Captain Beyond's cosmic knees-up, Dancing Madly Backwards. Ministry's is closer to the 1972 blueprint, though the original had an Escher staircase feel and a touch of diffidence: Ministry don't do diffidence, they roar. Hooky turns the tune into a trip through a hollow universe, powered by fizzing dance beats and gritty dead-eyed 1982 bass. I reckon Mr Hook wins hands down but it depends on your inclinations. This 12" is like Joseph's coat: it comes in many colours. Finding a particular one will be like tracking down a scarce Panini sticker...

Bobby Oroza The Otherside/Make Me Believe *Big Crown BC 120*

Finnish crooner – don't turn the page – changes tack with this tenderly-grooving, folk-soul song with a touch of the astral about it. Handsome hustling but underplayed drum part and plaited guitar leave room for Bobby to remind us there's more to life than our opinions. Understatement is its biggest asset: it's a whisper from someone who cares. Flip opens with upset Hammond and a little two-step beat, while Bobby tries to trust his emotions. His best 45 by some distance.

Bacao Rhythm & Steel Band Represent/Juicy Fruit *Big Crown BC 124*

Steel pan music is more than tinkling versions of Yellow Bird: it had and still possesses a funky streak, and that's what Bacao Rhythm & Steel Band, the German (alleged) band focus on. Their latest 45 presents Represent as Nas never imagined it. Over a pushy, pulsing groove, the pans twinkle, the brass smoulders, the bassline (tuba?) throbs and gangster vibes are conjured up. It's less declamatory than the original, but still has something to say, and it's a logical remake because the celeste chords which the masterful producer DJ Premier conjured up for Nas lurk in the same area of the audio spectrum as a steel drum. Badass, menacing yet still approachable, like your friendly neighbourhood hoodlum. On the flip, they cover Mtume's 80s dancefloor smash Juicy Fruit, and yes, it *is* the percussionist Mtume from the avant-garde Mtume Umoja Ensemble.

Lightnin' Hopkins Hopkins' Sky Hop/Lonesome In Your Home *P-Vine/Herald Japan P 74540*

I couldn't resist this one, thanks to its literally striking retro sleeve. Regarded by some as the poet of the blues, like his first names should be Gerald Manley rather than Sam John, he cut Hopkins' Sky Hop in '56, and its resonated ever since: it inspired Stevie Ray Vaughan. There's little poetry on Sky Hop though, unless a dude playing rocking guitar at breakneck speed without bothering whether his band are keeping up (they mostly are) amounts to poetry. Lonesome In Your Home sounds exactly as its title suggests; the dust twirls through shafts of sunlight, the whisky glass burns a ring into the furniture and Lightnin' utters his sad tale, which suddenly finishes as if he's just got bored with it. There's definitely poetry in Lonesome, as his goose metaphor makes clear. The blues lives. Even if Lightnin' doesn't.

Ian McCann

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Better Daze – 'Original vinyl-only record shop in the Yorkshire Dales. Thousands of LPs and singles from 50s to 90s, with collections arriving each week. Plus Juke Box hire and a selection of Juke Boxes for sale.' **Zetland Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 1NA.** Tel: 01609 781383 / 07852419937. better.daze@virgin.net / www.betterdaze.co.uk

Five Rise Records – 'Located near the historic 5 rise locks in Bingley, buying and selling new and used vinyl and serving fresh coffee.' **30C Park Road, Bingley, BD16 4JQ**. Tel: 01274 512867 / Web: www.fiveriserecords.co.uk

Grey 'n' Pink Collectors Records – 'Established for 25 years we specialise in vinyl and CDs: Rock 'n' Roll, 60s, Blues, Folk, Reggae, Indie, New Wave and Punk, to present day Rock and Pop.' **57 Brook Street, Chester CH1 3DZ.** Tel: 0124 431 1921. info@greynpinkrecords.com

Kingbee Records – 'Huge selection of second hand records and CDs. Specialise in Soul, Reggae, Punk, Indie, Jazz, Blues, Sixties, Rock etc on 7" and 12" & LP.' **519 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 0UF.** Tel: 0161 860 4762. kingbee.records@yahoo.co.uk / www.kingbeerecords.co.uk

Pear Music Shop – 'CDs, Vinyl, DVDs, Cassettes, Musical instruments and Accessories, LPs, 7", 78's, 45s, 12", excellent ordering service. 30,000 pieces of vinyl and growing.' **24 High Street, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 0EQ.** Tel: 07903 733730 / 01423 864120. pcornerwalker@googlemail.com

Replay Records – 'Established in 1999. Stocking new and pre-owned CD's and Records. Shop open – Tues-Sat 9.30–5.30.' **62-64 Freeman Street, Grimsby DN32 7AG**. Tel: 01472 351125. replay-records@btconnect.com

Reflex – 'Classic indie high-street store, catering to all musical tastes, fads & fashions. Fully geared up online with worldwide mail-order. Specialist in new release vinyl on 7" and LP.' **23 Nun Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5AG.** 0191 2603246 reflexrecordshop.com

RPM Discs– 'A traditional record shop specialising in quality value for money second hand vinyl. CDs and new vinyl also stocked. Home to one of the UKs largest singles only on-line shops. **7A The Shop, Front Street, Wingate, County Durham, TS28 5AA.** Tel: 07711 450045 / sales@rpmdiscs.co.uk www.rpmdiscs.co.uk / www.45rpmdiscs.co.uk

Rubber Soul Records - 'Run by a life-long Record Collector, selling most genres in store. Sell your individual records, vinyl collections or pop memorabilia quickly and easily. Ex cash paid. Please get in touch.' **19 Marsh Street South, Hanley, Stoke-On-Trent, ST1 1JA.** Tel: 07986 729197 rubbersoulrecords@hotmail.co.uk

Skeleton Records – 'Established in 1971, we carry over 150,000 new and used LPs, singles, CDs, tapes, videos and DVDs. All types of music catered for – we buy your unwanted vinyl, CDs, DVDs.' **11 Oxton Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 2QQ.** Tel: 0151 6539 003. skrecs@hotmail.co.ukwww.skeletonrecords.co.uk

Spinning Discs Sheffield – 'An independent record shop where music lovers can meet, relax, drink coffee and browse new, reissue and select second hand vinyl in a friendly community environment.' **55 Chesterfield Road, Meersbrook, Sheffield S8 0RL.** Tel: 07521 450111.contact@spinningdiscsheffield.co.uk www.spinningdiscssheffield.co.uk

The Musical Box– 'Liverpool's oldest record shop since 1947, owned by a family business spanning four generations. We take pride in our longevity and extensive history, having been featured in several TV programmes and documentaries. We are renowned for being a 'hidden gem' and specialise in new old vinyl LPs, 7" singles, CDs, 78s & cassettes. **457 West Derby Road, Tuebrook, Liverpool L6 4BL** Tel: 01512633845. musicalbox@hotmail.co.uk www.instagram.com/themusicalboxrecordshop www.facebook.com/themusicalboxrecordshop

Shop Of The Month: RPM Discs – Wingate

Wingate in County Durham is our destination this month. Having expanded from a singles-only website, **RPM Discs'** shop now sells multi-genre music across various formats. Co-owner **Mark Wilcox** tells **Steve Burniston** about 7"s and much more

Tell us about the shop, including its history and the kind of music you sell.
RPM Discs originally traded as an online business via its singles-only website commencing in 2008. Looking for larger premises in 2015, the intention was to look for a warehouse to facilitate the expansion of stock. In doing so the previous owner fell upon a vacant shop outlet and it seemed appropriate to open a physical record shop to complement the online singles business. In January 2019 we had the opportunity to buy the business. Since then, our focus has been to develop the shop, providing good quality, value-for-money second-hand vinyl across all music genres. We also sell new vinyl, CDs and a small selection of cassettes, books, and DVDs.

Why are singles still so important?
For many people, the first record they purchased is likely to have been a 7" single so I think there is a nostalgic association with this format. The song featured on a single takes people back to a particular time in their life providing an emotional attachment – happy, sad, celebratory memories. Second-hand singles are also relatively cheap compared to LPs and enable a person to develop collections quickly. Besides the music element there is also the artistic aspect of the single, whether it be a particular label, sleeve, coloured or picture vinyl – important aspects to many collectors. The varied orders received via our singles website also suggests people are buying singles as part of the recent upsurge in jukebox sales. What's not to like about the 7" single?

What genres and artists are most popular with your customers?
Artists connected to the classic/heavy/punk/indie rock scene are always in demand and pressings from the 90s/early noughties – when we get them! Eighties synthpop also appears to be on an upward trend. Offered boxes of Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours* we wouldn't hesitate to buy them!

How are independent record shops making a difference?
Like it or loathe it, online and streaming platforms are here to stay. But for many, browsing and crate-digging through racks and boxes not knowing what they will unearth is paradise – independent shops provide and satisfy that fix. They also provide their own distinct atmosphere – no two are the same. The social element offered by such shops cannot be overstated either: they remain an important asset to many communities. Furthermore, they support the growth in everything retro/vintage – popular among the younger generation. Long live the independent record shop!

What is the most interesting rare record you have sold recently?
A punk single by Chaos: 1983 Philippines pressing (RCA Victor Label XFPB0 -031), which we sold for £850.

And name one elusive rare record that you would love to get for the shop.
Well, for me, an obsessive Rush fan, it would be their first LP on the Moon Record Label. Howard, my business partner, would prefer Joy Division's EP *An Ideal For Living.*

RPM Discs, 7A, Front Street, Wingate, County Durham, TS28 5AA
07711 450045 / rpmdiscs.co.uk.

TNT Records Ltd – Independent vinyl record shop in the Lake District, supplying all genres and open 7 days. New releases and new reissues including limited edition. Music merchandise and listening rooms available. **86 Duke Street, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1RD.** Tel: 07428171256. info@tntrecords.co.uk

Vinyl Guru – 'New, Used, Rare & Collectible Vinyl from £1. David Bowie Specialist, Video Game Soundtracks & Electronic Music, Art Prints & Frames, Books, Hifi including Turntables, Styli & huge range of accessories.' **69 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1SG.** Tel: 0191 242 0430. info@vinylguru.co.uk, www.vinylguru.co.uk

Vinyl Tap – 'New & Used, Vinyl & Cds. New Releases, Indies Exclusives, Dinked Editions. Over 150,000 items in stock online and available in store. Can't find in the shop, please ask' **42 John William Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1ER.** 01484 845999 www.vinyltap.co.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

Boneyard Records – Stockists of new and used vinyl. Blues, soul, jazz, country, folk, reggae and indie. Also a selection of guitars, strings and record players. **27-29 Market Street Arcade, Omagh, County Tyrone BT78 1EE** Tel: 07765 788591 Email: johnniemullin@hotmail.co.uk

OVERSEAS

Nostalgipalatset / Trash Palace – 'Sweden's BIGGEST store for VINYL! We specialise in collectable rock, progressive, indie, jazz, blues, soul, reggae etc. Also Scandinavia´s No 1 stockist of RARE metal & punk. Even a wide range of pop memorabilia like posters, magazines etc." Open Mo-Fri 11am-7pm, Sat-Sun 11am-3pm.' **Sankt Eriksgatan 101, 11331 Stockholm, Sweden.** Tel: (+46)8340061 / info@nostalgipalatset.com, www.nostalgipalatset.com

Vinylucky – 'Singapore's premier location for fine quality, hard-to-find LPs, 12" singles, new/vintage/pre-owned in top condition. At least 13,500 LPs/12" in-stock. Weekly new arrivals. "A PLACE WHERE GREAT MUSIC LIVES!" "THE GOLD STANDARD IN VINYL RECORDS".' **No. 1 Coleman Street, The Adelphi, Unit #B1-42, Singapore 179803.** / Tel: +65-6336-9071. vinylucky@hotmail.com / http://vinylucky.blogspot.com

Gibert Joseph Musique – 'Biggest independent records shop from France for more than 35 years.' **34 Boulevard Saint Michel, 75006 Paris, France.** Gibertjoseph.com Tel: +33 44 41 88 53. Email: philippe.marie@gibertjoseph.com

Lost Padre Records – 'A record shop specialising in vintage LPs and 45s. We have a great love for garage rock, psych, soul, punk, funk, the music of New Mexico and esoteric recordings from the world over.' **131B W. Water Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501, USA.** Tel: +1 505 310 6389 Email: lostpadrerecords@gmail.com

Hiss & Crackle Records Ground Level – 'Local indie releases, Australian + imports. Stocking new & pre-loved records, CDs, tapes, books/zines and more! + live music with an in-store stage!' **Ground Level 18 Council Street WALLSEND NSW AUSTRALIA 2287** Tel: +61 40010583 Email: mitchel@hissandcrackle.com / www.hissandcrackle.com

Hot Stuff AB – 'Southern Sweden´s leading shop for collectable records & ephemera. 50.000+ items of second hand, "new" limited editions and inhouse labels. Bank vault with high end collectables and wide range of vinyls in almost any genre. If you travel a long way, we even got special deals for hotels.' **Norra Esplanaden 5, Almhult, Sweden 34330.** Tel: +46 476 10449 / www.hotstuff.se

RECORD LISTINGS

Sell Vinyl/CDs direct to RC readers, call us on **0208 752 8172**
or Email **listings@recordcollectormag.com**

NEXT ISSUE: AUGUST 2022 (on sale 14 JULY)
Deadline for submitting adverts (Listings & Classified): Monday 20 JUNE
Please email your advert (word doc/excel file/plain text) to: listings@recordcollectormag.com
(Postal address: Record Collector Listings, Diamond Publishing Ltd, 7th Floor Vantage London, Great West Road, London, TW8 9AG)
Following issue: SEPTEMBER 2022 (on sale 11 AUGUST) Deadline: Monday 28 JULY

GOLDEN OLDIES

Write to: DAVE SANDERS, 25 YORK CLOSE, WHITEHILL, BORDON, GU35 9PX.
Tel: 01420 472432. Email: davesanders2003@hotmail.com
P&P: Singles / EPs £1.60 for first record + 25p each additional. LPs: £3.75 for first record + £1.25 for each additional. Europe and Rest of World on application. All records have a full money back guarantee.

SINGLES

CHRIS ANDREWS, Something On My Mind (Decca F22365, Demo) EX 5.50
APHRODITE'S CHILD, Rain And Tears (Mercury MF1039) M 12.50
ARIZONA SWAMP COMPANY, Train Keeps Rollin' (Parl. R5841, Demo) VG 20.00
BRIAN AUGER & TRINITY, I Want To Take You Higher (RCA 1947) EX 6.50
CLIFF AUNGIER, My Love And I (RCA 1730, Demo) EX 7.50
BALLOON CORPS, Make It Right (Stateside SS8024, Demo) M 20.00
BARRON KNIGHTS, It's Been A Very Good Year (Col. DB7698, Demo) EX 6.50
BARRON KNIGHTS, Merry Gentle Pops (Col. DB7780, Demo) M 7.50
BEACH-NUTS, Out In The Sun (London HL9988, Demo) M 30.00
BEACON STREET UNION, Blue Suede Shoes (MGM 1415, Demo) M 25.00
BEATLES, She Loves You (Parl. R5055) EX 6.50
BEATLES, I Want To Hold Your Hand (Parl. R5084) M 9.50
BEATLES, I Feel Fine (Parl. R5200) M 9.50
BEATLES, Help (Parl. R5305) EX 7.50
BEATLES, We Can Work It Out (Parl. R5389) EX 7.50
BEATLES, From Me To You (Parl. R5015) EX 7.50
BEATLES, Ticket To Ride (Parl. R5265) M 9.50
BEATLES, Can't Buy Me Love (Parl. R5114) EX 7.50
BEATLES, Eleanor Rigby (Parl. R5493) EX 7.50
BEATLES, Hello Goodbye (Parl. R5655) EX 7.50
BEATLES, Strawberry Fields Forever (Parl. R5570, PC) VG/EX 25.00
BEE GEES, World (Polydor 56220) M 2.50
CHUCK BERRY, Little Marie (Pye Int. 7N25271) EX 6.50
DAVE BERRY, One Heart Between Two (Decca F12020) M 7.50
BLACK VELVET, What Am I To Do (Beacon BEA182) EX 8.50
BABBITY BLUE, Don't Make Me (Decca F12053, Demo) M 12.50
JOYCE BOND, Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da (Island WIP6051) M 15.00
RICKY BOWDEN, Alone To Cry (HMV POP1162) EX 6.50
BILLY BOYLE, My Baby's Crazy 'Bout Elvis (Decca F11503, Demo) EX 15.00
AL "TNT" BRAGGS, Earthquake (Action ACT4506) EX 17.50
JOHN BROMLEY, What A Woman Does (Polydor 56244) EX 20.00
JOHN BROMLEY, Kick A Tin Can (Atlantic 584289, sol) M 12.50
BOOTS BROWN & BLOCKBUSTERS, Jim Twangy (Tri, RCA 1102) EX 6.50
RUTH BROWN, This Little Girls Gone Rockin' (Tri-Lon. HLE8757) EX 60.00
TONY BRUNO, What's Yesterday (Capitol CL15534, Demo) VG 12.50
ERIC BURDON & ANIMALS, Monterey (MGM 1412) EX 4.50
JOHNNY BURNETTE, God Country & My Baby (London HLG9453) M 30.00
ROY "C", Shotgun Wedding (Island WIP273) EX 12.50
AL CAIOLA, Big Guitar (United Artists UP1003, Demo) M 7.50
RAY CAMERON, Doing My Time (Island WIP6003) M 9.50
MEL CARTER, When A Boy Falls In Love (Pye Int. 7N25212) M 45.00
CASCADES, Shy Girl (W. Bros WB68) EX 4.50
KENNY CHANDLER, Heart (Stateside SS166, Demo) M 15.00
CHICAGO LOOP, She Comes To Me (Stateside SS564, Demo) EX 30.00
CHIMES, Once In A While (London HLU9283) EX 17.50
NEIL CHRISTIAN, That's Nice (Strike JH301) M 12.50
CHRISTIEN BROTHERS, I Reached For You (Major Minor MM628) M 4.50
JIMMY CLANTON, Another Sleepless Night (Top Rank JAR382) M 8.50
DAVE CLARK FIVE, The Red Balloon (Col. D88465) EX 4.50
SANFORD CLARK, Go On Home (London HLW9095) EX 8.50
CLOVERS, Love Potion No. 9 (Round London HLT8949) EX 25.00
COASTERS, What About Us (London HLE9020) M 15.00
COASTERS, Yakety Yak (Tri, London HLE8665) EX 9.50
COASTERS, T'ain't Nothin' To Me (London HLK9863) EX 9.50
EDDIE COCHRAN, Weekend (London HLGQ362) EX 8.50
ALMA COGAN, Link Shoe Laces (HMV POP608) EX 8.50
CRESTERS, I Just Don't Understand (HMV POP1249) M 20.00
CRESTS, The Angels Listened In (London HL8954) EX 30.00
CRICKETS, Maybe Baby (Tri-Coral 072307) VG 6.50
CRITTERS, Marryin' Kind Of Love (London HLR10119) VG 8.50
CRYSTALS, I Wonder (London HLU9852) EX 35.00
CRYSTALS, Then He Kissed Me (London HLL9773) EX 4.50
CRYSTALS, Da Doo Ron Ron (London HLU9732) EX 6.50
JOHNNY CYMBAL, Teenage Heaven (London HLR9731) EX 12.50
DAKOTAS, The Cruel Sea (Parl. R5044) EX 6.50
BOBBY DARIN, Queen Of The Hop (Tri-London HLE8737) EX 17.50
DATE WITH SOUL, Yes Sir That's My Baby (State. SS2062, Demo) M 45.00
SPENCER DAVIS GROUP, Somebody Help Me (Fontana TF679) EX 4.50
WARREN DAVIS MONDAY BAND, Wait For Me (Col. DB8190) EX 20.00
DERRINGERS, True Love True Love (Capitol CL15189, Demo) EX 15.00
LEE DIAMOND & CHEROKEES, I'll Step Down (Fontana H310) EX 6.50
BO DIDDLEY, Say Man Back Again (London HLM9035) VG 29.50
DION & DELMONTS, A Teenager In Love (Tri-London HL8874) EX 22.00
DION & BELMONTS, Where Or When (London HLU9030) EX 17.50
FATS DOMINO, My Blue Heaven (Tri-London HLU8280) EX 35.00
FATS DOMINO, Wait And See (Tri-London HLP8519) EX 9.50
FATS DOMINO, Whole Lotta Loving (Tri-London HLP8759) EX 12.50
FATS DOMINO, Mary Oh Mary (HMV POP1324, Demo) EX 8.50
DONOVAN, Colours (Pye 7N15866) EX 3.50
CRAIG DOUGLAS, Another You (Top Rank JAR603) M 6.50
DRIFTERS, I Count The Tears (London HLK9287) EX 17.50
DUANE EDDY, Guitar Man (RCA 1425, Demo) M 15.00
DAVID EDE Obsession (Pye 7N15329) EX 5.50
DAVID EDE, Twistin' Those Meeces To Pieces (Pye 7N15417) M 9.50
J. VINCENT EDWARD, Run To The Sun (CBS 4388) M 9.50
ELLIOTS SUNSHINE, Is It Too Late (Philips BF1549) M 6.50
BERN ELLIOTT & FENMEN, New Orleans (Decca F11852) EX 5.50
ESSEX, Easier Said Than Done (Col. DB7077) EX 9.50
PAUL EVANS, Hushabye Little Guitar (London HLL9239) M 12.50
PAUL EVANS, Midnite Special (London HLL9045) EX 20.00
FAABIAN, Tiger (HMV POP643) M 9.50
FAIRFIELD PARLOR, Bordeaux Rose (Prism PRI1) M 7.50
MARIANNE FAITHFUL, As Tears Go By (Decca F11923) EX 4.50
FAMILY DOGG, A Way Of Life (Bell BLKL1055) EX 4.50
FLEETWOODS, Outside My Window (Top Rank JAR294) EX 6.50
FOUR EVERS, A Lovely Way To Say Goodnight (CBS 202349, Demo) M 45.00
FOUR SPICES, Fire Engine Boogie (MGM 944)Small Wol) EX 50.00
FOUR TOPS, Walk Away Renee (Tamla TMGS34) EX 5.50
FOUR TOPS, Reach Out I'll Be There (Tamla TMGS79) EX 7.50
BOBBY FREEMAN, Do You Want To Dance (Tri-London HLJ8644) VG 9.50
ERNIE FREEMAN, Raunchy (Tri-London HLP8523) M 17.50
FRUGAL SOUND, Norwegian Wood (Pye 7N17062) M 12.50
GEOFF GODDARD, Girl Bride (HMV POP938) EX 27.50
GOLDEN GATE STRINGS, Mr. Tambourine Man (Col. D37634) M 25.00
BOBBY GOLDSBORO, The Runaround (Stateside SS193, Demo) M 20.00
GOLDIE & GINGERBREADS, Can't You Hear etc. (Decca F12931, Demo) EX 6.50
BOBBY GOLDSBORO, No Fun At The Fair (U. Artists UP1166) EX 22.00
GONKS, Gonk Song (Decca F11984, Demo) EX 25.00
LESLEY GORE, Maybe I Know (Mercury MF829) M 9.50
CHICK GRAHAM, Education (Decca 11859, Demo) M 12.50
GERRY GRANAHAN, It Hurts (Top Rank JAR262) M 12.50
JULIE GRANT, Hello Love (Pye 7N15590) EX 8.50
IAIN GREGORY, Can't You Hear The Beat etc. (Pye 7N15397) EX 17.50
JIM GUNNER, Hoolee Jump (Decca F11276) EX 8.50
JET HARRIS, Big Bad Bass (Decca F11841, Demo) M 12.50
HEAVEN, Hangin' On (CBA 7702, Demo) EX 20.00
HI-LITERS, Dance Me To Death (Mercury AMT1011) EX 120.00
HILLTOPPERS, The Joker (Tri-London HL08528) EX 25.00
HIPPIES, Memory Lane (Cameo Parkway P863) M 20.00
EDDIE HODGES, I'm Gonna Knock On Your Door (London HLA9369) EX 6.50
HOLLIES, Searchin' (Parl. R5052) EX 6.50
HOLLIES, Stay (Parl. R5077) EX 4.50
HOLLIES, Yes I Will (Parl. R5232) EX 4.50
HOLLIES, Just One Look (Parl. R5104) EX 4.50
BUDDY HOLLY, Baby I Don't Care (Coral 072432) EX 6.50
BUDDY HOLLY, Wishing (Coral 072466) EX 6.50
BUDDY HOLLY, Listen To Me (Tri-Coral 072288) VG 8.50
HOLLYWOOD ARGYLES, Alley-Oop (London HLU9146) EX 6.50
JOHN LEE HOOKER, Dimples (Stateside SS297) EX 12.50
HUDDERSFIELD TRANSIT AUTHORITY, Runaway (Poly. 2001284) M 6.50
KRIS IFE, Wherever You Are (Bumble GE122) M 20.00
IKETTES, I'm Blue (London HLK9508) EX 12.50
INADEQUATES, Pretty Face (Capitol CL15051) EX 17.50
MICK JAGGER, Memo From Turner (Decca F13067) EX 9.50
JAGUARS, Opus To Spring (Impression IMP101) M 30.00
JAY, I Rise I Fall (Coral 072471) EX 27.50
JAY & THE AMERICANS, Cara Mia (United Artists UP1094) EX 6.50
JEFFERSON, Love & World Loves With You (Pye 7N17855) M 6.50
KRIS JENSEN, Donna Donna (Hickory 45-1224, Demo) M 8.50
BILLY JOE & THE CHECKMATES, Percolator (London HLU9502) M 6.50
BETTY JOHNSON, There's Never Been A Night (Tri-Lon. HLE8701) EX 17.50
TOM JONES, This And That (Decca F12481) M 12.50
JIMMY JUSTICE, Don't Say That Again (Pye 7N15601) EX 4.50
DAVE JUSTIN, You Outside (Polydor 56253) EX 8.50
JOHNNY "K", Lemonade (Fontana TF408) EX 9.50
JERRY KELLER, Here Comes Summer (Tri-London HLR8890) M 7.50
JOHNNY KIDD & PIRATES, Always And Ever (HMV POP1269) EX 6.50
DANNY KING, Pretty Things (Col. 0373456, Demo) M 45.00
KINKS, Dedicated Follower Of Fashion (Pye 7N17064) EX 4.50
KINKS, You Really Got Me (Pye 7N15673) EX 5.50
KNOCKOUTS, Riot In Room 3C (Top Rank JAR279) EX 15.00
BUDDY KNOX, She's Gone (Liberty LIB55473, Demo) EX 17.50
BOB KUBAN & THE IN-MEN, The Teaser (Stateside SS514) M 20.00
PATTY LA BELLE 8; HER BELLES, Over The Rainbow (Atlantic 4064) EX 7.50
DON LANG, Witch Doctor (HMV POP488, Demo Sticker) M 12.50
GARY LEWIS & PLAYBOYS, The Loser (Liberty LIB55949, Demo) M 8.50
JACKIE LEE, Rancho (Top Rank JAR286) EX 6.50
LAURA LEE, Tell Tommy I Miss Him (Triumph RGM1030, noc) EX 15.00
LAURA LEE, Love In Every Room (Col. DB8495, Demo) M 12.50
LEMON PIPERS, Green Tambourine (Pye Int. 7N25444) M 4.50
JOHN LEYTON & LE ROYS, Make Love To Me (HMV POP1264) EX 6.50
MARK LINDSAY, Arizona (CBS 4699) M 7.50
LOCOMOTIVE, Rudi's In Love (Parl. R5718) M 17.50
JERRY LORDAN, Sing Like An Angel (Parl. R4653) EX 9.50
JOE LOSS, World Cup March (HMV POP1517) M 7.50
LOVIN' SPOONFUL, Nashville Cats (Kama Sutra KA8204) EX 4.50
LOVIN' SPOONFUL, Darling Be Home Soon (Kama Sutra KA8207) EX 8.50
LULU, WHAT A Wonderful Feeling (Decca F12491) M 9.50
LULU, Let's Pretend (Col. DB8221) M 8.50
KENNY LYNCH, Puff (HMV POP1057) M 12.50
KENNY LYNCH, My Own Two Feet (HMV POP1367) M 32.50
KARI LYNN, You've Got To See Mama etc. (Oriole C3164) M 7.50
GLORIA LYNNE, I Wish You Love (London HLY9846, Demo) M 9.50
NEIL MACARTHUR, She's Not There (Deram DM225) M 20.00
MAJORS, She's A Troublemaker (London HLP9627) EX 12.50
CARL MANN, Pretend (London HLS9006) M 30.00
ERNIE MARESCA, Shout Shout (London HLU9531) EX 12.50
ERNIE MARESCA, Love Express (London HLU9720, Demo) M 20.00
MICKI MARLO, That's Right (Tri.London HL8481) EX 17.50
BERYL MARSDEN, I Know (Decca F11707) EX 9.50
BARRY MASON, Misty Morning Eyes (Decca F12401, Demo) M 12.50
SUSAN MAUGHAN, Bobby's Girl (Philips 3265443F) M 5.50
JOHN MAYALL'S BLUESBREAKERS, Suspicion (Decca F12684) EX 9.50
MESSENGERS, I'm Stealin' Back (Col. DB7344, Demo) EX 9.50
MESSENGERS, When Did You Leave Heaven (Col. DB7495, Demo) M 9.50
MINDBENDERS, Ashes To Ashes (Fontana TF731) EX 4.50
MIRACLES, Shop Around (London HL9276) EX 45.00
MOJOS, Everything's Al'right (Decca F11853) EX 3.50
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MONGRELS, My Love For You (Decca F 12086) EX 20.00
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NASHVILLE TEENS, Google Eye (Decca F12000) M 4.50
JIM NESBIT, Tiger In My Tank (Vocalion V9241) EX 12.50
NEWBEATS, Run Baby Run (Hickory 45-1332) EX 20.00
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN, Take Me Home etc. (Pye Int. 7N25599, Demo) EX 5.50
PATSY ANN NOBLE, It's Better To Cry Today (Col. 087148) EX 6.50
NOBLEMEN, Thunder Wagon (Top Rank JAR155) M 12.50
NOCTURNES, Why Am I Treated So Bad (Col. DB8219) M 8.50
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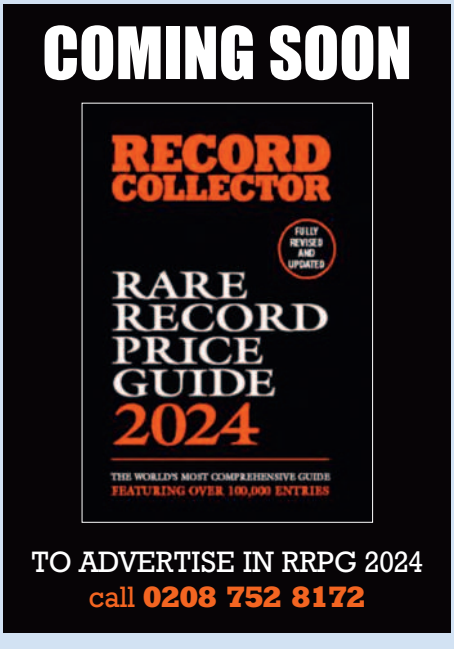

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Lives

All hail: Killing Joke's Jaz Coleman

Killing Joke

London Hammersmith Eventim Apollo
9/4/22

Anglo-American rockers, The Imbeciles, kicked off with a short, effective, punky set. The Fall's Brix Smith followed, full of energy and providing the link between The Runaways, Patti Smith and Hole, mostly from her forthcoming LP, though The Fall's classic Totally Wired guaranteed a well-received bow. The last date of Killing Joke's *Honour The Fire* tour was filmed for future release, and the minimalist stage set should make for good viewing. They delivered incredible intensity at high volume, spanning their career. Love Like Blood was a glorious start, and recent classic, I Am The Virus, was poignant. Both 1980 & 2003's self-titled albums were well-represented, Wardance, Requiem, Primitive, Loose Cannon and Total Invasion shining, while Pandemonium was an equally glorious finish. A unique, vital band.
Jim Rowland

Standout collectable: K÷93 signed clear 10".

Smith/Kotzen

London Islington Assembly Hall
8/3/22

Iron Maiden guitarist Adrian Smith and Winery Dogs' six-stringer Richie Kotzen cut a well-received, bluesy LP, and here Smith's old Urchin mucker, Dave 'Bucket' Colwell, opened with his Rebel Heart, featuring singer Paul Manzi. Their impressive set included 20 Good Summers and ASAP's Reach Out. Smith/Kotzen focused on their debut, delivering its entirety with sonic flair, trading solos with fluid audacity, as on slow-burn ballad, You Don't Know Me. Kotzen's wife, Julia Lage, provided flawless bass, while Kotzen dazzled on his You Can't Save Me. Smith went one better, inviting Maiden colleague, Nicko McBrain, to drum on Wasted Years and the swaggering Solar Fire.
Mark Taylor

Standout collectable: signed Smith/Kotzen CD, £15.

Less Than Jake

Birmingham O_2 Institute
6/4/22

The Florida ska-punk legends delivered positivity, the crowd bouncing to Gainesville Rock City and National Anthem. Speedy guitar riffs, uplifting bass and chunky choruses rolled out on crowd-pleasers, History Of A Boring Town, The Science Of Selling Yourself Short and gritty fist-pumper, The High Cost Of Low Living. Providing many crowd-surfing opportunities, their energetic show featured balloons, a skull-man mascot, and comic banter between vocalist Chris Demakes and bassist Roger Lima. The ska-punk kings remain an ever-evolving act and closed with ever-fun anthem, All My Best Friends Are Metalheads.
Emily MacNevin

Madness

London Royal Albert Hall
24/3/22

After a three-year Covid absence, the *Teenage Cancer Trust* concerts returned, Paul Weller making his seventh appearance. Accompanied by a row of musicians, he performed acoustically, offering a connoisseur set including B-sides and rarely-aired numbers, such as the charming Dusk Til Dawn, intricate Out Of The Sinking, The Style Council's Down In The Seine and The Jam's English Rose. Things erupted when Camden's finest entered, bodies bopping to the ska sound of Lee Thompson's sax-led One Step Beyond. The party continued as Madness smashed through greatest hits and comeback material, notably the homely NW5 and Mr Apples. A dapper Suggs was playful, their jukebox presenting a riotous House Of Fun and Baggy Trousers, roof-raising Our House, singalong It Must Be Love and fez frenzy Night Boat To Cairo.
Mark Taylor

Ghost

Birmingham Resorts World Arena
15/4/22

Ecclesiastical stained glass and satanic imagery provided the backdrop for Sweden's Ghost, launching into Kaisarion and the menacing Rats, urging screaming fans to their feet. Flamboyant leader, Tobias Forge, offered banter and spirited segues, pirouetting as nameless ghouls kept spirits up with musical merriment, including a guitar duel. Newer tracks, Hunter's Moon and Call Me Little Sunshine, flanked oldies, Year Zero and He Is, while Miasma's 80s sax solo and the heavier Mummy Dust's keytar solo preceded a confetti cannon. Their baroque'n'roll spectacle of pop, neo-classical doom and theatrical rock saw a closing triple-whammy encore of Metallica's Enter Sandman, a stomping Dance Macabre, and Square Hammer, leaving everyone giddy. *Emily MacNevin*

Sparks

London Camden Roundhouse
17/4/22

Bounding into So May We Start Now, from movie, *Annette*, the Mael brothers didn't stop for two hours. And after two years away, the pent-up energy was immense, Russell singing and dancing with abandon, Ron pounding the keys with inner abandon. Their five-piece, black-clad band formed a neat back line, while up-front was an exuberant celebration of 50 years, from Wonder Girl to the swaying All That. Between there were hits – a blistering This Town Ain't Big Enough For Both Of Us, and a monumentally throbbing No 1 In Heaven. A rollcall of lesser-played numbers – Angst In My Pants, Stravinsky's Only Hit, Shopping Mall Of Love, I Married Myself – swept from LA pop to opera, disco beat to cinematic grandeur. A spectacle crossing all borders of intellectual rock'n'roll, while wearing silly trousers. *Nick Dalton*

Halestorm

London Shepherd's O_2 Bush Empire
13/3/22

An uplifting gig from the Pennsylvanians, creating a sanctuary from real-world doom. The first half saw acoustic flavours and hearty tales, Lzzy Hale, in pig tails, gracing the piano for Break In, Dear Daughter and a unifying Raise Your Horns. The rest of the band appeared for ballad, Familiar Taste Of Poison, drummer Arejay Hale knocking out rhythm with humongous sticks and throwing in one-liners with badum-tish delivery. Should I Stay Or Should I Go was dedicated to The Clash, before a spirited Apocalyptic and I Like It Heavy. After a change, Lzzy returned, glamorous and sassy, breaking out chords with Joe Hottinger on the title track to the impending *Back From The Dead*. They could do no wrong with duelling guitars on I Am The Fire and Amen, and closer, I Miss The Misery, expressed all the elements of what makes Halestorm such an utterly compelling live experience.
Mark Taylor

His Lordship

London King's Cross Lexington
20/4/22

James Walbourne's new band brought to mind the heady days of The Flaming Stars and Gallon Drunk – perspiring guys in black suits, hurling around while blasting out brittle, passionate rock'n'roll. Walbourne (lead guitarist of The Pretenders) has been plying London's music pub circuit from 16 and, with this muscular trio, he's identified his niche. A beautiful rendition of Santo & Johnny's Sleepwalk provided the one moment of less than breakneck speed. As their set climaxed with a riotous rock'n'roll medley, Walbourne's true love was revealed, covering Terry Dene and PJ Proby. Who else does that nowadays?
Oliver Gray

Bowling For Soup

Birmingham O_2 Academy
16/4/22

After witty banter from vocalist Jaret Reddick, the Texan rockers opened with My Hometown, and the party began with High School Never Ends and The Bitch Song. Stopping between tunes to joke, the punk veterans powered through a blistering set, including new I Wanna Be Brad Pitt and Alexa Bliss. An amusing comedy act photo opportunity preceded a belting Girl All The Bad Guys Want and classics, Emily and 1985. Never a dull moment in a knowingly silly performance.
Emily MacNevin

Aimee Mann

Ridgefield Playhouse, Ridgefield, Connecticut, USA
20/4/22

Mann broke ground with You Fall, from her latest, *Queen Of The Summer Hotel,* a duet with Jonathan Coulton and, glad to be gigging again, she did a couple of songs with him during his opening set. With four cuts, *The Forgotten Arm* was well-represented, as was her fist in velvet glove-style, in Little Bombs and Video. Her voice glided effortlessly from sarcastic aside, up to the high notes, and no one does ennui better, as on Lost In Space and Rollercoasters. With Gumby, an ode to a hoarder, her mordant wit was on display, as on Suicide Is Murder. And despite being bumped off Steely Dan's tour, she managed a convincing take on their Brooklyn. She wrapped up with rocker, Long Shot. A joy. *Christopher Walsh*

Credit: (Killing Joke) Eric Duvet

The Godfathers
Edinburgh
Voodoo Rooms
24/4/22
The Godfathers blasted out with purpose classics such as Cause I Said So, If I Only Had Time, Walking Talking Johnny Cash Blues, This Damnation, Birth School Work Death, and more. But new album, *Alpha Beta Gamma Delta*, got a good preview, OCD standing out as classic Godfathers rock'n'roll with a chorus to die for. Vocalist Peter Coyne was supported ably by bassist Jon Priestley, while ex-Heavy Drapes drummer Billy Duncanson and guitarist Richie Simpson's playful camaraderie was fun to see. Poker-faced axe-slinger, Wayne Vernaak, worked with conviction, all delivering high-quality rock'n'roll. *Tim Keppie*

Paul Weller
London Brixton
O_2 Academy
24/4/22
The final night of his British tour saw Weller bounce on, his excellent band launching into White Sky and Long Time, from *Saturn's Pattern*. The Modfather's fantastic two-hour journey through his songbook saw him on piano for crowd-pleasers, Broken Stones and You Do Something To Me, before the evening built to a finale of The Jam anthems, That's Entertainment and Town Called Malice. Ocean Colour Scene guitarist, Steve Cradock, delivered another masterclass, from rock solos on Hung Up, to lovely jazz patterns in The Style Council songs, such as Have You Ever Had It Blue. A memorable night. *Gary Oliver*

Jivin' Miss Daisy
Eastleigh Concorde Club
27/4/22
Feelgood music for doom-laden times, leader, bassist and arranger, Simon Thorpe, fronts one of the UK's finest swing bands, featuring a stellar line-up, who skip through the 30s to the 60s, cherry-picking the songbooks of Ellington, Dorsey, Gershwin, Basie and Porter. Bubbly songstress, Liz Fletcher, captured the spirit of the jazz age with a captivating, energetic performance, delivering beautifully Peggy Lee's Lullaby In Rhythm. Other standouts were Malcolm Earle Smith (trombone, vocals), John Pearce (piano) and Matt Skelton (John Wilson Orchestra drummer). Two lively sets rounded off with Gershwin's standard, I Got Rhythm, Jivin' Miss Daisy offering huge helpings of it. *Duncan Eaton*

Nick Lowe
Manchester RNCM
20/4/22
With just acoustic guitar and his honey-laden voice, Lowe took us on a 90-minute journey through his catalogue, and a selection from every album bar his Christmas one. There was a healthy dose from *The Brentford Trilogy*, hits, Cruel To Be Kind and I Knew The Bride, and a clutch of newer songs – Tokyo Bay, his take on Bee Gees' Heartbreaker, Blue On Blue, Love Starvation and the Mavis Staples-covered Far Celestial Shore. Closing, the anthemic (What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love And Understanding was more relevant than ever, while the encore was Heart Of The City and a sparse, almost spoken-word cover of Elvis Costello's Alison, which Lowe made his own. The hallmark of a true performer. *Richard Houghton*

Joanne Shaw Taylor
London Shepherd's Bush O_2 Empire
26/4/22
An artist come of age onstage, Taylor is reaping major, overdue props. Respected for her guitar skills, she exhibited a Joe Bonamassa collaboration bounce, lengthening her musical stride with stellar interpretations from her recent *The Blues*. She added an extra string to her bow, her bewitching vocals dragging the spotlight away from her nifty finger-work. With a seasoned band, from opener, Stop Messin' Around, she riffed through scintillating blues standards, providing heavy delivery on I've Been Lovin' You For Too Long, her voice matching the emotional intensity of the song's sad sentiment and carrying the audience with fiery flair. *Paul Davies*
Standout collectable: Tea towel, £5

Gary Numan
Cardiff University Great Hall
28/4/22
Touring his stellar *Intruder*, Numanoids were treated to powerful, pumped-up beats from his well-drilled four-piece. The man himself – aged 64 – belied his age with an idiosyncratic, all-action performance, his singing spot-on, high in the mix, perfectly clear. Classic Numan lighting supplied the backdrop, scattered with poignant film clips. The considered setlist showcased his best, earlier classics, such as the mesmerising Down In The Park, Metal, We Are Glass and Remind Me To Smile, mixing with newer tracks, including The Gift, Is This World Not Enough, The Chosen and Pray For The Pain You Serve. Are "Friends" Electric? and Cars raised excitement levels further, Numan holding his singalong audience with delight. *Rob T Bamford*

The Dev in disguise, celebrating the Albert's 150th

Northern Kin Festival
Durham Ushaw Historic House
29/4-1/5/22
A diverse line-up saw Dr Feelgood show why they remain a circuit essential, with supercharged classic R&B. Carl Palmer's ELP Legacy delivered a prog masterclass, Newton Faulkner charmed the crowd with a headlining set, and Scottish rockers Gun ramped things up with a fiery show. Fairport Convention brought an English summer feel, contrasting sharply with The Urban Voodoo Machine's rambunctious, whiskey-soaked gypsy blues. Focus yodelled inimitably, and Then Jerico brought welcome pop cheer, before ex-Whitesnake's Bernie Marsden laid down classy blues. Dreadzone's deep grooves had the crowd moving as one, while New Model Army battled through illness, and Del Amitri's well-chosen set covered all bases. The Blow Monkeys were cut short as Dr Robert's voice blew out, but a smokin' rock'n'roll piano-pounding from Tankus The Henge got things back on track. Sad Café delivered classy West Coast harmonies, before epic rock from Andy Fairweather Low. Nik Kershaw offered well-crafted pop, and FM's slick melodic rock spiced things up with Bad Luck. A rollicking Ferocious Dog's Celtic punk left the crowd reeling, while Squeeze rolled out the hits, including Up The Junction, closing a wonderful, good-value weekend. *Mick Burgess*

Devin Townsend
London Royal Albert Hall
16/4/22
Devin's band's exemplary execution of his devilishly detailed music, in a shock and awe performance, explains why many of his followers approach his concerts like religious experiences, musical epiphanies devoured by devotees. The metal-head congregation received exceptional communion, from the initial detonation of Failure, lighting the touchpaper on a ripping set of rarely-aired songs. Hyperdrive, Deadhead, Ih-Ah! and Supercrush fed the faithful, following his commandments throughout. *The Greatest Sets Of My Life*? All that was missing was someone walking on at the end with a red book, saying, "Tonight, Devin Townsend, this is…". *Paul Davies*

Genesis
London Greenwich O_2
26/3/22
A fond farewell to Genesis, as they performed their last (Covid rescheduled) show, with Peter Gabriel in attendance. The seated Phil Collins' voice has diminished, but a celebration of the band's 50-plus years saw his son, Nic Collins, do an admirable drumming job in a seven-piece line-up, including Mike Rutherford, Tony Banks, guitarist Daryl Stuermer, and backing vocalists. Opening to a flash of light with the brace of Behind The Lines/Duke's End, Turn It On Again they did. A sinister Mama saw Collins lit in devilish red, and he noted Putin before Land Of Confusion. The core trio went out front for a stripped-down That's All, The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway and Follow You, Follow Me, and Invisible Touch closed, before encores of I Can't Dance, complete with humorous walk from the road crew, and the cream of The Carpet Crawlers. Collins left with a walking stick, last to bow out. And Then There Were None… *Mark Taylor*

The Divine Comedy
London Palladium
4/5/22
Neil Hannon rolled out his hits and a strong selection of songs from his singular catalogue during a highly entertaining 30 years of TDC show. The bishop's son's spirited sermons had his congregation dancing, clapping and singing to At The Indie Disco, Generation Sex and Something For The Weekend. Humorous moments abounded, especially when Hannon lay supine at the close of Our Mutual Friend. Songs Of Love (the *Father Ted* title tune) and National Express completed a pageant of astute lyrical irony and musical joy. *Paul Davies*

The Nightingales
London Islington
O_2 Garage
3/5/22
Robert Lloyd stared, arms aloft, like a secondary school deputy-head for whom it'd all become too much. Drummer Fliss Kitson pounded, guitarist James Wood knocked out chunky riffs and strange melodies, and bassist Andreas Schmid made our feet vibrate. A celebration for the post-punks in the wake of biopic, *King Rocker*, the set thundered through, dark and disturbing, like an insane cross between Pere Ubu and PiL. The wild evening kicked off with mesmeric Rotterdam lo-fi popsters, Rats On Rafts, then anti-comic Ted Chippington, before singer/raconteur, Lloyd, directed a masterclass in booming, timeless, Northern angst'n'roll. *Nick Dalton*

Send your live reviews to tim.jones@metropolis.co.uk

Gig Guide

John Cale July (15) Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (18) Whitley Bay Playhouse (19) York Barbican (21) Bexhill De La Warr Pavilion (23) Cambridge Corn Exchange (24) London Palladium (25) Birmingham Town Hall

The Prodigy July (8-9) Sheffield O_2 Academy (14) Liverpool Montford Hall (15) Leeds O_2 Academy (16) Birmingham O_2 Academy (18) Newcastle O_2 City Hall (19) Manchester O_2 Victoria Warehouse (21-23) London Brixton O_2 Academy

Tears For Fears, Alison Moyet July (1) Telford QEII Arena (2) Warminster Longleat House (5) Aylesbury Waddesdon Manor (7) Newcastle Utilita Arena (8) Kelso Floors Castle (9) Lytham St Anne's *Lytham Festival* (12) Derby Incora County Ground (14) Leeds Millennium Square (15) Warwick Castle (16) Scarborough Open Air Theatre (19) New Milton Chewton Glen (20) Canterbury Spitfire Ground (22) Hove 1st Central County Ground (23) Cardiff Castle (24) Hatfield House (26) Exeter Powderham Castle

Now Booking

Alcatrazz February 2023 (3) Buckley Tivoli (4) Blackpool Waterloo (5) Edinburgh Bannermans (7) Bradford Nightrain (8) Newcastle Trillians (9) Stoke Eleven (10) Bilston Robin 2 (11) London Camden Underworld

Chameleons December (7) Coventry HMV Empire (8) Liverpool Cavern

Belinda Carlisle February 2023 (3) Birmingham Symphony Hall (4) Cardiff St David's Hall (6) Portsmouth Guildhall (8) Oxford New Theatre (10) London Palladium (11) Nottingham RCH (13) Southend Cliffs Pavilion (15) Exeter Great Hall (17) Manchester Academy (18) Edinburgh Usher Hall (20) York Barbican (21) Guildford G Live (23) Gateshead Sage (24) Sheffield City Hall 24 Feb Friday (25) Cambridge Corn Exchange

Peter Frampton November (5) Stoke Hanley Victoria Hall (6) Glasgow SEC Armadillo (8) London Royal Albert Hall

Florence + The Machine November (18-19) London Greenwich O_2 (21) Bournemouth BIC (22) Manchester AO Arena (24) Birmingham Utilita Arena (25) Leeds First Direct Arena (27) Glasgow OVO Hydro (28) Nottingham Motorpoint Arena

Kaiser Chiefs, The Fratellis November (2) Swansea Arena (3) Cardiff Motorpoint Arena (5) London Greenwich O_2 (7) Newcastle O_2 City Hall (8) Hull Bonus Arena (10) Liverpool M&S Bank Arena (11) Glasgow OVO Hydro (12) Leeds First Direct Arena (14) Brighton Centre (15) Plymouth Pavilions (17) Bournemouth BIC (18) Birmingham Utilita Arena (19) Nottingham Motorpoint Arena

Nile November (6) London Islington Garage (7) Manchester Rebellion (8) Glasgow Slay (9) Belfast Limelight 2 (11) Coventry HMV Empire

PVRIS RESCHEDULED January 2023 (22) Manchester Academy (23) Glasgow O_2 Academy (25) Birmingham O_2 Institute

The Searchers April 2023 (13-14) Wimbourne Tivoli (16) Eastleigh Concorde (21) Weston-super-Mare Playhouse (27) Buxton Opera House (28) Bedford Corn Exchange (29) King's Lynn Corn Exchange (30) Bury St Edmunds Apex **May** (4) Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (11) Crawley Hawth (12) Peterborough New Theatre (20) Halifax Victoria Theatre (21) Birmingham Town Hall (25) Swansea Grand Theatre (27) Rugby BENN Hall **June** (2) Lowestoft Marina Theatre (3) Northampton Deco (8) Basingstoke Anvil (9) Eastbourne Royal Hippodrome (11) Stevenage Gordon Craig Theatre (14) Hull City Hall (16) Stockport Plaza (17) Liverpool Philharmonic Hall

Sabaton April 2023 (14) Leeds First Direct Arena **(15)** London Wembley OVO Arena (16) Cardiff Motorpoint Arena (18) Glasgow OVO Hydro

Joe Satriani RESCHEDULED April 2023 (12) Birmingham Symphony Hall (13) Gateshead Sage (14) Manchester Bridgewater Hall (15) Glasgow O_2 Academy (16) Bexhill De La Warr (17) London Palladium

Midge Ure RESCHEDULED April 2023 (28) Ipswich Regent **May** (2) Guildford G Live (3) Southampton Engine Rooms (6) Poole Lighthouse (7) Southend-on-Sea Cliffs Pavilion (8) Cardiff Tramshed (10) Sheffield City Hall (11) Bradford St George's Hall (12) Hull Bonus Arena (15) Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (16) Blackburn King George's Hall (18) Glasgow Barrowlands (19) Edinburgh Usher Hall (20) Aberdeen Music Hall (21) Newcastle O_2 City Hall (23) Northampton Royal & Derngate (24) Leicester De Montfort Hall (25) Birmingham Symphony Hall (26) Cambridge Corn Exchange (28) Manchester Albert Hall (29) Llandudno Venue Cymru (30) Nottingham Rock City (31) Swindon MECA

Martha Wainwright July (27) London Cadogan Hall (28) Bristol Beacon (29) Folkestone Quarterhouse **August** (2) Snape Maltings Concert Hall (3) Chester Storyhouse (5) Wickham *Festival* (6) Wavendon Stables (7) Newcastle Wylam Brewery

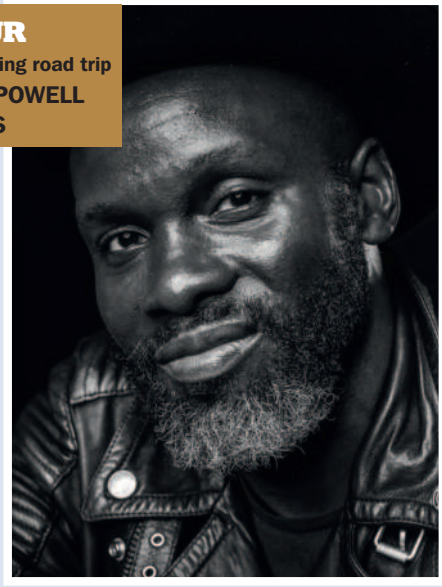
WASP March 2023 (17) Manchester Academy (18) Wolverhampton KK's Steel Mill (19) Nottingham Rock City (21) Glasgow O_2 Academy (22) Newcastle O_2 City Hall (23) Bristol O_2 Academy

The Zombies RESCHEDULED April 2023 (13) Bristol Fleece (14) London Chelsea Under The Bridge (29) Taunton Brewhouse **May** (5) New Brighton Floral Pavilion (6) Wavendon Stables

TOUR DU JOUR

Spotlighting an upcoming road trip

This month: GARY POWELL OF THE LIBERTINES



Do you have any pre-/post-show routines?
My pre-show consists of finding space to warm up and stretch, Jane Fonda-style, listening to calming music, and not speaking to anyone prior to the show. It's my 'getting in the zone' thing, and I know it annoys some folks when they ask me something and I don't answer them, but I literally don't say a word before I go onstage.

Will you be playing any songs that you rarely perform?
Yeah, all the tracks from the first album that we never play anymore.

Will the set-list change over the course of the tour?
I can't tell you now. It'd be great to play the whole of the first album, to give it a new feel, while being respectful of how we recorded it – same energy and dynamics, but added emotional detail and space. That'd be great to show the audience where we're heading next musically, so they can see that we ain't attempting to re-invent the wheel and that the new stuff will be just as palatable as the old. It's about the people, man!

Will you check out your tour supports?
Of course. One on the last tour, The Dead Freights, signed to my label, 25 Hour Convenience Store. They were amazing, and it was awesome that we could be a part of their ascendancy.

Will there be any unusual merchandise on sale?
I freaking hope so, for our like-minded hive. We should all have something that can be cherished.

Will you be recording any shows for CD or DVD?
I think so.

Do you collect bootlegs?
I was burgled years ago when I lived in Dalston, London, and my vinyl and movie collection found a new home with thieves. I've recently started buying vinyl again – jazz, funk, hip-hop, rock'n'roll, a bunch of it cheap in Mexico.

Do you go to shows at all?
I haven't been in ages, but I met IDLES in São Paulo and saw them.

Do you have an amusing road story?
I remember in Dublin waking up drunk one morning and I saw a ladder next to some street lights. I got off the tour bus in my underpants, climbed the ladder and sang in the street. The chill woke me up from my drunken shenanigans, and I'd garnered an early morning audience. You get the picture.

The Libertines play in July (1) Manchester Castlefield Bowl (22) Hatfield House August (5) Cardiff Bute Park (8) Edinburgh O_2 Academy.

TOUR NEWS

London: **Cradle Of Filth**, with afterparty, Greenwich Indigo$_2$, 29 October. ■ **Hard-Fi**, Kentish Town O_2 Forum, 1 October. ■ **Stanley Clarke**, Camden Koko, 13 July. ■ **Ausgang**, King's Cross Water Rats, 6 October. ■ **KT Tunstall**, Canary Wharf Boisdale, 11 November. ■ **Bauhaus**, Brixton O_2 Academy, 9 August. ■ **Sunn O)))**, Fabric, 22 June. ■ **Fantastic Negrito**, Camden Jazz Café, 26-27 July. *Also:* **Kathryn Williams**, Cardiff Level 3. ■ **Rick Wakeman**, Beckenham St George's Arts, 3 June.

For more tours/gig news see www.recordcollectormag.com/latestnews.

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CHESTER
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18TH 2022
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2022 TOUR

JULY 2022
THURSDAY 28TH
LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
FRIDAY 29TH
HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
SATURDAY 30TH
CASTLETON DEVILS ARSE CAVE

OCTOBER 2022
SATURDAY 15TH
PLANET ROCK ROCKTOBER
02 BRISTOL ACADEMY
SUNDAY 16TH
NORTHAMPTON ROADMENDER
TUESDAY 18TH
PLANET ROCK ROCKTOBER
02 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
THURSDAY 20TH
SOUTHAMPTON 1865
FRIDAY 21ST
LIVERPOOL GRAND CENTRAL HALL
SATURDAY 22ND
PLANET ROCK ROCKTOBER
02 SHEFFIELD ACADEMY

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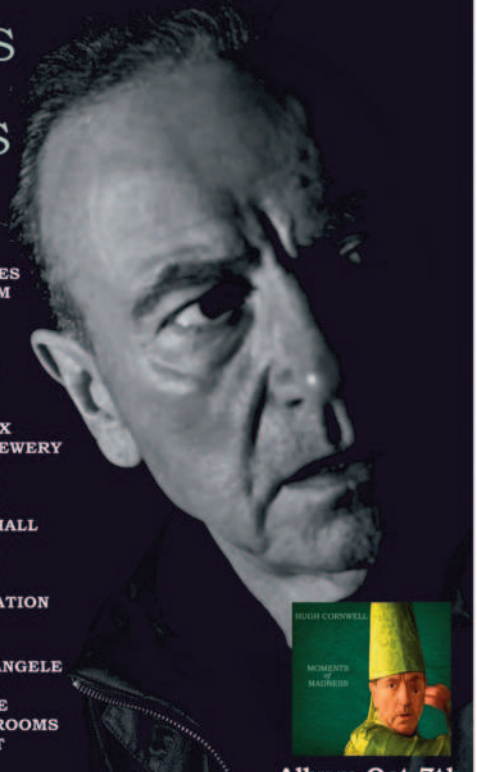
MOMENTS of MADNESS TOUR



NOVEMBER
04 MILTON KEYNES STABLES
05 HULL TOWER BALLROOM
09 EXETER PHOENIX
10 SOUTHAMPTON 1865
11 CARDIFF Y PLAS
12 BRIGHTON CONCORDE
13 BRISTOL FLEECE
16 LINCOLN PLATFORM
17 BURY ST EDMUNDS APEX
18 NEWCASTLE WYLAM BREWERY
19 LEEDS BRUDENELL
20 CHESTER LIVE ROOMS
23 SOUTHEND CHINNERYS
24 ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL
25 BILSTON THE ROBIN
26 MANCHESTER GORILLA
27 DERBY THE VENUE
30 CARLISLE OLD FIRE STATION

DECEMBER
01 EDINBURGH LA BELLE ANGELE
02 GLASGOW THE GARAGE
03 ABERDEEN LEMON TREE
05 NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS
06 NORWICH WATERFRONT

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Focus

SUN 28 AUG
HOLMFIRTH
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THEWEDDINGPRESENT
seamonsters
30th anniversary shows
18:08 BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX
19:08 BARNSLEY BIRDWELL VENUE
20:08 CASTLETON DEVILS ARSE CAVE
25:08 BURY MET THEATRE
26:08 LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
23:09 FROME CHEESE & GRAIN

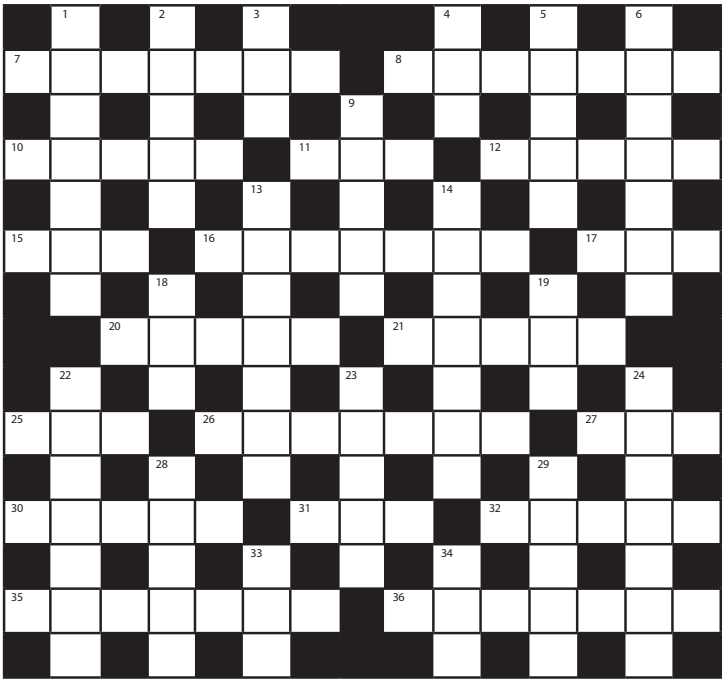
Crossword & Competitions

ACROSS

7) Harry _ (7)
8) The "Kings of Metal" (7)
10) *Urban* _ (5)
11) _ Boy Three (3)
12) _, Aitken & Waterman (5)
15) _ Gordon (3)
16) The "Walking Dead" (7)
17) _ Saints (3)
20) _-*Finish* (5)
21) Ashes To _ (5)
25) It's A _ (3)
26) *The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine* _ (7)
27) *Signing* _ (3)
30) Robert, Will, Elliott (5)
31) _ Turner (3)
32) Beck's 1994 hit (5)
35) Nuclear _ (7)
36) _ _ *Die* (5,2)

DOWN

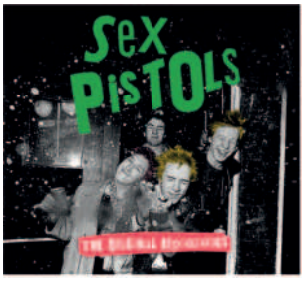
1) *God Bless* _ _ (4,3)
2) Two Hearts Beat _ _ (2,3)
3) _ George (3)
4) Formerly Inner Space (3)
5) Nancy Sinatra 1966 LP (5)
6) The Young _ (7)
9) Judas Priest 1986 LP (5)
13) *Fresh Fruit For* _ *Vegetables* (7)
14) *Flat Baroque And* _ (7)
18) _ The (3)
19) *This is The* _ (3)
22) _ *Twins* (7)
23) _ On The Water (5)
24) *Sound* _ (7)
28) _ Cats (5)
29) Damaged _ (5)
33) _ *To The Rainbow* (3)
34) Simply, London, Alert (3)



DEEP 70s

David Hepworth has been writing, broadcasting and speaking about music since the 70s – so who better to compile this mammoth compilation of that decade for this 24-track, double-LP Demon Music set? As the title tells us, this collection does deep, steering away from the retro radio regulars, and instead focuses on tracks that never sullied the charts, such as: Big Star, Bobby Charles, Andy Pratt, Greg Allman, Johnny Winter, Quo, ZZ Top, The Motors, Sandy Denny, The Records, Roy Harper… To be in with a chance of winning one of two copies (on clear vinyl), please tell is which BBC TV show Hepworth presented in the 80s: a) *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, b) *Swap Shop*, c) *One Man And His Dog?*

SEX PISTOLS



They graced the cover of *RC*'s June issue, and they are back on our screens courtesy of Danny Boyle, but even more importantly there is a new collection of the Sex Pistols on vinyl via this double-LP black vinyl gatefold set from Universal Music. Twenty tracks covering the filth and the fury of 1976-78. To be in with a chance of winning one of three copies, please tell us the name of Paul Cook & Steve Jones' post-Pistols band: a) The Avengers, b) The Professionals, c) The Sweeney?

STEVE ELLIS

This career-spanning box set from Steve Ellis includes albums by The Love Affair, Ellis, Widowmaker, as well as Steve Ellis solo albums and recordings with Paul Weller – that's quite some output! To cater for all that material, this 175-track set from Demon Music is delivered across a whooping 10 CDs. To be in with a chance of winning, please complete and submit this month's crossword and send to the usual address at the bottom of the page.

TUNETABLES FLIGHTCASE

What's cooler than having a tour-grade flightcase in your room? Having one fashioned to store and display records, that's what! New UK company Tunetables have launched an impressive brand, take a look over at www.tunetables.co.uk. This month's clue word is: 'Sleepy' and it's the final clue of six, so check back over the previous five issues for the other pointers and see if you can tell us which 1968 Rolling Stones song lyric comprises all the clues.

JUNE Solution

	S		U		A			L		E		P
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D	E	E		P	E	A	C	O	C	K		L	E	S
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C	L	A	P	T	O	N		T	O	M	C	L	U	B
	E		S		M				N		O		T	

MAY WINNERS

OZRICS: Andrew Diprose
CAT STEVENS: E Carter, Andy John, Stanley Farrant
MARILLION: Michael Gee, John Mould

All entries **with your address** to **rccompetitions@metropolis.co.uk** or to Record Collector Competitions, 7th Floor, Vantage London, Great West Road, London, TW8 9AG, by 13 July, unless otherwise stated. Only enter once per competition – if submitting via post please include your phone number.

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UNDER THE RADAR

Artists, bands and labels meriting more attention

This month: Dave Stewart and Barbara Gaskin

For reasons that barely need explaining, Dave Stewart and Barbara Gaskin's plans to stage a concert last year celebrating their 40th anniversary as a duo had to be mothballed. The heartening news is that the concert is now rescheduled for this July (see details below), with guitarist Beren Matthews in tow.

Best-known for the wonderfully icy and imperious cover of Lesley Gore's It's My Party, which hauled them into the collective consciousness when it topped the charts in October 1981, Dave Stewart and Barbara Gaskin already had an intertwined backstory which made the perception of them as ephemeral 80s pop stars all the more inapt.

Stewart's stints with Egg, Hatfield And The North, National Health and Bruford established him as a keyboardist and composer whose uncannily advanced musicality was offset with irrepressible humour and an almost pathological self-effacement. Gaskin, meanwhile, elevated the progressive-folk outfit Spirogyra into the realms of divinity with the airy precision of her inimitable vocals. An introduction was effected by Stewart's old Uriel bandmate, Steve Hillage, whose decision to amicably leave the group in order to study at the University of Canterbury had more ramifications than anyone could have anticipated.

"Dave and I met on December 12, 1969 at his parents' house in Waterloo," Gaskin remembers. "Steve Hillage and I were travelling back to our respective homes after our first term at university in Canterbury. A few weeks later I was invited to join Spirogyra, and my and Dave's musical careers went in parallel for a few years from that point.

"Had I realised I was meeting my future wife I'd have smartened myself up a bit, but as I recall it was a surprise visit: no mobiles or emails back then!"

Beguiled by Gaskin's singing on one of Hillage's demos, Stewart invited the former to participate in Chris Cutler's loose musical collective, The Ottawa Company. Alongside Amanda Parsons and Ann Rosenthal, Gaskin then materialised as one of the wryly named Northettes, whose backing vocals permeated the sprightly art-rock which characterised Stewart's quartet Hatfield And The North.

Fortified therefore with a tranche of solid Canterbury credentials, Stewart and Gaskin were as bemused as anyone to find themselves, several years down the line, with a No 1 single. "I'd never dreamed of covering It's My Party until a friend suggested it," Stewart reflects. "Good idea, as it turned out. I asked Barb to sing on the track and she agreed, despite initial reservations. We were amazed when it became a hit. We did it purely for fun."

It's to the duo's credit that they maintained their equanimity. "I had a negative attitude to anything 'commercial' and politely declined offers to appear in adverts and at shopping centres, etc," Gaskin says. "*Top Of The Pops* was a given, and we said yes to European TV appearances, which were usually good fun."

"Miming on TV in front of a bored BBC film crew is not really my thing," Stewart interjects, "but I enjoyed whacking the electric drums and Barb did a good histrionic impression of the lachrymose party host. I'm proud to say I got banned from the BBC bar for bringing in my own beer: a career highlight. I've appealed to the Supreme Court to get the ban lifted."

> **"I'm proud to say I got banned from the BBC bar – a career highlight"**

Following It's My Party, Stewart and Gaskin released a string of excellent, meticulously crafted singles, not least their cheeringly unconventional reworkings of Busy Doing Nothing and Siamese Cat Song, as well as enchanting covers of Leipzig by Thomas Dolby and Four Tops' I'm In A Different World. While these were warmly received in Japan and Europe, the UK was signally deficient in picking up on them; and it wasn't until 1986 that the duo were able to belatedly release their first album, *Up From The Dark*.

"In the UK we were more or less back to square one [after It's My Party]," Stewart reflects. "But my focus was on developing our sound and learning how to write good songs for us. I knew it would take time and wasn't interested in becoming a sort of Mickie Most hit record producer."

To date, seven more albums (including a singles collection) have since emerged, all of which are available on Stewart's own Broken Records label. These map out an artistic trajectory in which Stewart's compositions gradually supplanted the covers. "That wasn't a policy decision, it just came out that way," he observes. "It's been a natural evolution, which we're comfortable with."

The preponderance of mellow, thoughtful songs on the duo's most recent albums, *Green And Blue* and *Star Clocks*, begs the question of whether Stewart and Gaskin consciously took the decision to change gear. "Since Barb's voice is gentle and fairly quiet, it's natural to write ballads for her," Stewart says. "Softer tunes such as Let Me Sleep Tonight and As Far As Dreams Can Go are some of my favourite Stewart / Gaskin songs. But we still like to rock out, as you can hear on Afraid Of Clowns and The Arms of Miklosko on *Star Clocks*. The songs dictate their own character: we never try to make them fit an album concept."

Gaskin regards Stewart's own compositions as the most special in their canon: "I have a particular affection for tracks we finished in a bit of a hurry. Henry & James, The Hamburger Song and Make Me Promises..."

Stewart, for his part, declares a sense of pride in New Jerusalem. "It's an epic construction, and its anti-nationalist lyrics still have contemporary relevance. I also enjoy the intricate quasi-orchestral arrangement of Busy Doing Nothing. The sections were painstakingly recorded on separate pieces of tape: mixing it nearly killed our sound engineer, Ted Hayton! Barb's always very modest about her singing, but I think her vocals on ballads like The Cloths of Heaven and Heavy Heart are amazing."

In advance of their postponed 40th-anniversary concert, Stewart and Gaskin's respect for each other remains undimmed. "In a band you have to consider your colleagues' priorities, and that invariably involves musical compromises," Stewart suggests. "The only person I consult now is Barb, which makes life simpler: if she doesn't fancy one of my suggestions, we don't do it!"

Gaskin, meanwhile, "recognise[s] Dave's musical character in everything he's done, past or present, and however labelled. He has a unique, inventive, and harmonically sophisticated musical mind, and the combination of that and my voice is what defines our particular style."

Words: Oregano Rathbone

See the Stewart / Gaskin band at Kings Place Hall One, Kings Cross, London on 9 July. Tickets are available from Burning Shed: www.burningshed.com/store/davebarb.

Photos: Chris Craske

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THE ENGINE ROOM

The unsung heroes who helped forge modern music

This month: Dick Rowe

In the annals of Beatleology, Dick Rowe is forever remembered as the man who snubbed Brian Epstein and supposedly turned down the opportunity to sign the Fab Four for Decca. According to Epstein in his autobiography, *A Cellarful of Noise* (1964), Rowe informed him: "Not to mince words, Mr Epstein, we don't like your boys' sound." And while he always vigorously denied the attribution, Rowe had to live with the stigma for the remainder of his professional career.

It was the era of jukeboxes and jitterbugs, of big bands and bobbysox singers, when Rowe joined the A&R department at Decca in 1948. In those days, multiskilling was part of the job description, and he soon turned his hand to producing some of the label's more promising signings. Rowe quickly earned a reputation for being hard-nosed, and assertive, and for good reason he became known as "the company spiv".

In 1953 he produced a No 1 hit for the UK vocal group, The Stargazers: With Broken Wings. It was the first time a native act topped the UK charts. Many other hits followed for the five-piece who were repeatedly nominated as the most popular vocal group by *NME* readers, and who also supplied the backing harmonies for one of Dickie Valentine's best sellers: The Finger of Suspicion (1954). He also produced Valentine's Christmas Alphabet (1955) which became the first UK Christmas-themed single to top the charts, and so initiated a (frequently irritating) trend that continues to this day.

Rowe never professed to have any special talent in the recording studio nor any qualified knowledge of music, but it can hardly have been more by accident than design that he produced so many hits for the likes of Jimmy Young, David Whitfield, The Beverley Sisters, Winifred Atwell and Lita Roza.

His commercial instincts did, however, often override good taste. His insistence that Roza record that paean to puppy love, (How Much Is) That Doggie In The Window? (1953), can be forgiven in view of the fact that he also encouraged her to cover Crazy Man, Crazy, a Stateside hit for Bill Haley And His Comets now officially acknowledged as the first charting US rock'n'roll single.

Rowe was briefly lured from Decca in '59 when offered the chance to manage the newly-launched Top Rank Records. If he wasted no time in securing dependable crooner Craig Douglas, he also signed several "with-it" American acts including Gary 'US' Bonds, The Ventures, Chubby Checker, as well as teen idol Bobby Rydell and "explosive" rocker, Freddy Cannon; they all bolstered the label's credibility, if not his own. At best, Rowe was a reluctant convert to rock'n'roll, but he had the good sense to green-light the release of Bert Weedon's version of Guitar Boogie Shuffle, which became the first UK instrumental to feature the electric guitar as lead instrument.

Rowe mitigated his failure with The Beatles by taking on the Stones

Possibly his greatest triumph at Top Rank was hitching his wagon to Joe Meek's star-making machine and releasing Johnny Remember Me by John Leyton; its otherworldly production lifted the song above the norm of the "death ditty" genre so prevalent at that time.

Within a couple of years, Rowe returned to Decca as head of A&R, and worked closely with Mike Smith and Tony Meehan, who had recently quit his role as drummer with The Shadows. Both appreciated Rowe's abilities as an ideas man, always willing to take risks and challenge Decca's entrenched musical policies.

As time would prove, Rowe was not infallible. While no one can deny that he played a significant part in shaping the career of Billy Fury, he did give him the occasional bum steer. He co-produced many of Fury's enduring hits such as Half-Way To Paradise (1961) and Last Night Was Made For Love (1962), but he also coerced him into recording a copycat cover of Presley's bilious Because Of Love in the same year, and cast him as the lead in the dire pop movie, *Play It Cool,* which was far from hip, daddio!

Then again, Rowe encouraged the musical reunion of Jet Harris and Tony Meehan – who said (detuned) guitar bands were out? Throughout the first half of '63, the instrumental combo outmanoeuvred The Shadows with a hat-trick of hits and might have achieved much more had Harris not been seriously injured in a car crash that August.

Rowe mitigated his failure to sign The Beatles by taking on The Rolling Stones. Following a tip-off from George Harrison, Rowe went to see the Stones perform at the Station Hotel in Richmond. He was astounded by the excitement the band generated onstage and the effect they had on their audience. He was equally impressed by their manager, Andrew Loog Oldham, whose drive and commitment to the cause he admired as much as the band's arrogant posturing.

As Oldham observes in his autobiography, *Stoned* (2001), "Dick Rowe was not the man who turned down The Beatles but the man who helped me to my great break, the man who signed the Stones. Don't let the pipe or the self-deprecating remarks fool you, Dick Rowe was good at his job for a very long time; anybody can have a hit, but can they have another, and another?"

The Stones opened the floodgates at Decca, and Rowe subsequently signed a plethora of new acts that included The Moody Blues, The Animals, Them, The Zombies, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Small Faces, The Tremeloes and many other bankable names. He also championed Tom Jones, Engelbert Humperdinck and Gilbert O'Sullivan, all of whom appealed to his fondness for balladeers.

Despite bad press, Rowe regularly struck good deals for his artists, always willing to nurture talent, with Scottish pop-rockers (The) Marmalade being a case in point. Signing to Decca in '69, they were offered free studio time and allowed to write and produce their own material; a generous arrangement courtesy of Rowe, which soon paid dividends as they scored a succession of major hits with Reflections Of My Life (1969), Rainbow (1970), Cousin Norman (1971) and Radancer (1972).

Rowe retired from the business in 1975, and, suffering from diabetes, he died 11 years later, aged 64. For everyone who saw him as a Mr Squaresville or an old school chancer, there were many others who appreciated that his congenial shepherding skills often kept the wolf from their door.

Words: Lin Bensley
Marmalade* Rainbow: The Decca Years 1969-1972 *is on Castle.

BIRTH! SCHOOL! WORK! DEATH!

Dion... on the soundtrack to his life

Hank Williams ***Moanin' The Blues*** (MGM X168, 2 x 7" EP, US, 1952) **£10**

Hearing Honky Tonk Blues from this album was what started me off, even though I was 11 and living in an Italian neighbourhood in the Bronx. I wanted to communicate like Hank, I was learning how to live through his records. Verbally, emotionally, spiritually, he was committed to every word. I was enthralled and soon knew 40 songs. When I went on tour with Buddy Holly – and Waylon Jennings, who was his bass player – they were amazed. Waylon said in his book he taught me Hank songs. No!

Jimmy Reed **Take Out Some Insurance** (Vee Jay VJ 314, 7", US, 1959) **£20**

I heard Jimmy sing, "You better take some insurance out on me, baby, because if you ever leave and say goodbye I'm going to lay right down and die." I thought it was the most brilliant thing I'd ever heard, then I heard Baby What You Want Me To Do – if I wanted to communicate like Hank, I wanted to groove like Jimmy. As a teenager I'd run down to the Apollo Theatre and see him play. Him and Hank, that's my DNA right there.

Chuck Berry **Johnny B Goode** (Chess 1691, 10" Shellac, US, 1957) **£15**

As a kid I started to watch the early rock'n'roll TV shows, things like *American Bandstand*, where you'd suddenly see Chuck dancing across your living room floor. Pre-60s records like this, Maybelline, Roll Over Beethoven and Rock And Roll Music are classic. And soon after I saw him on TV, I was working with him because at 17 I got a hit record. I wanted to rock like Chuck. He was the king.

Little Richard ***Here's Little Richard*** (Speciality SP-100, LP, US, 1957) **£100**

Rip It Up and Long Tall Sally from this, they were life-changing, they got into your system, resonated with your soul. It's mesmerising. I was friends with these guys from the early days, Chuck, Bo Diddley, Jerry Lee Lewis. They made me feel special. I was so young I'd go into Little Richard's dressing room, and I'd sit on the couch with his mother! Leva Mae, she loved my record, Ruby Baby, and she said, "Dion, you got soul." If Little Richard had complimented me, I'd have forgotten – but his mother!

Robert Johnson ***King Of The Delta Blues Singers*** (Columbia CL1654, LP, US, 1961) **£400**

I digested all that rock'n'roll then I signed to Columbia, and I was on a piano bench with Aretha Franklin, also newly signed, singing my hit Drip Drop with her, pounding the piano. Producer John Hammond said, "You have a flair for the blues" and played this, songs like Preaching Blues. Then Fred McDowell, Furry Lewis, a bunch of people. Drip Drop, The Wanderer, they're all blues songs. I didn't know the depth that they came from but when I heard this it opened a door.

Bob Dylan **Like A Rolling Stone** (Columbia 4-43346, 7", US, 1965) **£8**

I was there when he recorded this because producer Tom Wilson was my producer, too. I remember Bob singing, "How does it feel to be on your own, like a rolling stone?" and in my head I heard, "It feels damn good – I'm free." He brought thinking in single-handedly – with 50s music we were doing everything on instinct. And lots of people don't know that Bob is a great blues singer.

Muddy Waters ***Folk Singer*** (Chess LP-1483, LP, US, 1964) **£400**

I love him because there's something he gave me, the thing I call bragging rights. "I'm the wanderer, I roam around" or "I'm the gangster of love". "I'm the hoochie coochie man" – I love that approach. I saw the wise guys on the corner in my neighbourhood, so arrogant, and it seems this theme emerges on all my albums. Muddy Waters was the man for that, all that yelling, "I'm a man!"

Butterfield Blues Band ***East-West*** (Elektra EKS 7315, LP, US, 1966) **£60**

When Paul Butterfield arrived, my wife and I saw him in a club in Greenwich Village, playing with Elvin Bishop and Mike Bloomfield – and we were probably one of three tables taken up! It blew my mind. I've never felt such free abandon. He leaned into the blues and this album, with Walkin' Blues, is a thing of beauty. It really resonated with me, even though they were white guys from the south side of Chicago.

The Beatles ***Rubber Soul*** (Parlophone PMC 1267, LP, UK, 1965) **£250**

My favourite Beatles album. There's something about the ballads: Norwegian Wood, Michelle - I could play it real loud. I met John and Ringo in New York when Sid Bernstein brought them over. Me and John were in a store on 57th Street where Carnegie Hall was. We bought the same leather jacket – he wore his on the cover of *Rubber Soul*! I never got too into The Beatles, though… I lean more towards the three-chord thing.

Joe Bonamassa ***Live from the Royal Albert Hall*** (Provogue PRD 7274-1, LP, UK, 2009) **£25**

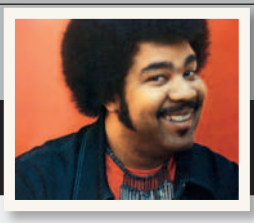
This is crazy good, with Eric Clapton. To hear those guys together is masterful, astonishing. Joe was the catalyst to the albums I'm doing now – I got to know Eric better while making the new one. He said, "You were part of my musical wake-up with Big Bill Broonzy and Robert Johnson." I didn't realise until about 15 years ago that this is where I'm coming from – even Runaround Sue is like a cleverly disguised blues song.

Words: Nick Dalton

Dion's album* Stomping Ground, *featuring Eric Clapton, Bruce Springsteen, Mark Knopfler, Joe Bonamassa and many more, is on KBTA Records (kbtarecords.com).

10 OF THE BEST

This month: **The MPS label**



Oscar Peterson ***Motions And Emotions*** (MPS 15251ST, LP, Germany, 1969) **£15**

This virtuosic Canadian pianist was one of the first big jazz names to sign to the legendary MPS label, run by producer Hans Georg Brunner-Schwer (1927-2004) from his studio in the quiet village of Villengen in Germany's Black Forest area. For *Motions And Emotions*, Peterson offered tasteful jazz interpretations of recent pop and soul hits, including Eleanor Rigby and Sunny. Peterson's piano was recorded in Germany, though Claus Ogerman's gorgeous orchestral arrangements were added in New York.

George Duke ***The Inner Source*** (MPS 332092, 2LP, Germany, 1973) **£150**

This kaleidoscopic double album captures Duke just after he left Frank Zappa's Mothers Of Invention to replace Joe Zawinul in jazz saxophonist Cannonball Adderley's band. A stunning showcase for Duke's keyboard mastery, the 16 tracks run the gamut from greasy electric funk (Au Right) and ruminative spiritual jazz (Peace) to dreamy acoustic ballads (Love Reborn) and mind-blowing synth experiments (Nigerian Numberuma, an early example of electronic sequencing). Duke would eventually go on to taste mainstream success at major labels but none of his post-MPS releases were as varied and imaginative as *The Inner Source*.

Freddie Hubbard ***The Hub Of Hubbard*** (MPS 15267ST, LP, Germany, 1970) **£30**

This phenomenal album was the Indianapolis trumpeter's only outing for MPS, recorded in the label's Black Forest studio during December '69. It sees him leading a quintet including pianist Roland Hanna and bassist Ron Carter. Hubbard's horn lines on the hard-swinging standard Without A Song show off the ease with which he executes devilishly difficult melodic runs. But he also had a softer romantic side as his wistful interpretation of the Sinatra ballad, The Things We Did Last Summer, reveals.

Bill Evans ***Symbiosis*** (MPS 2122094, LP, Germany, 1974) **£25**

This was one of MPS's most ambitious projects; a two-movement symphonic suite written by German composer/arranger Claus Ogerman featuring pianist Evans and his trio. Evans and Ogerman had collaborated on orchestral projects twice before, when the pianist was signed to Verve, but the 50-minute-long *Symbiosis*, recorded in New York, was markedly different in its format and scope. Often using densely layered textures, Ogerman creates an array of moods and styles for Evans, who dazzles on both acoustic and electric pianos.

Art Van Damme & The Singers Unlimited ***Invitation*** (MC 22016 LP, US, 1974) **£10**

Born in Michigan, Van Damme was a virtuoso accordionist who was popular in Europe and made a host of albums for MPS in the late 60s and early 70s. Arguably his best for the label is this one, recorded with the American vocal quartet, The Singers Unlimited, whose gorgeous close harmonies combine beautifully with Van Damme's glistening accordion melodies. Blending cleverly arranged jazz standards with striking interpretations of songs by the Bee Gees and Antonio Carlos Jobim, the album creates a dreamy ambience that is nothing less than magical.

Don Ellis ***Soaring*** (2125123-3, LP, Germany, 1973) **£25**

Best remembered for composing the film score to the 1971 crime thriller, *The French Connection,* Ellis was an underappreciated jazz pioneer; an innovative trumpeter who experimented with Indian music, electronics, microtonal instruments, and complex time signatures. Several of those elements define *Soaring*, an astonishing big band album that opens with Whiplash, a rhythmically complex tune that garnered mainstream appreciation after being recreated in the 2014 Oscar-winning movie of the same name.

Alphonse Mouzon ***In Search Of A Dream*** (0068192, LP, Germany, 1978) **£15**

South Carolina-born Mouzon was Weather Report's first drummer, renowned for his energised polyrhythmic style. He recorded four solo jazz-rock-inflected albums for Blue Note before landing at MPS in 1977. *In Search Of A Dream* was his third album for the Black Forest-based label and saw him joined by an all-star cast that included his former WR colleague, bassist Miroslav Vitous, together with guitarist Philip Catherine and keyboardist Joachim Kühn. The end result was a spectacular fusion album that blended thunderous high-octane grooves with more reflective pieces.

Joe Henderson ***Mirror Mirror*** (0068255, LP, Germany, 1980) **£35**

Famous for his husky and deeply soulful tenor saxophone tone, Ohio-born Henderson only made one album for MPS but it remains a must-hear session in his back catalogue. It was cut in Los Angeles in the august company of pianist Chick Corea, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Billy Higgins, all of whom interact with an ESP-like sense of anticipation. With its blend of intuitive group interplay and stunning solos, the Corea-penned Blues For Liebestraum is the outstanding cut.

Dexter Gordon And Slide Hampton ***A Day In Copenhagen*** (MPS 15230ST, LP, Germany, 1969) **£60**

A tenor sax titan from LA, Gordon had been happily living in Copenhagen for seven years when he teamed up with fellow American expat, trombonist Slide Hampton, who had settled in Europe the previous year. Accompanied by Jamaican trumpeter Dizzy Reece as well as two other exiled US musicians, pianist Kenny Drew and drummer Art Taylor, Gordon and Hampton serve up a combination of propulsive hard bop swingers and luminous ballads.

Dizzy Gillespie Reunion Band ***20th and 30th Anniversary*** (MPS 15207ST, LP, Germany, 1969) **£20**

Bebop legend Gillespie was 51 when he recorded this album fronting a 16-piece big band at the Berlin Jazz Festival in November 1968. But as his athletic trumpet solos revealed, he was still at the top of his game. Not only are his horn improvisations sensational but his band's ensemble work, with its intricate interplay, is also stunning. Undoubtedly one of the best titles in the MPS catalogue.

Words: Charles Waring

This year sees the re-launch of MPS, with its entire catalogue released digitally and many of its albums reissued on vinyl.

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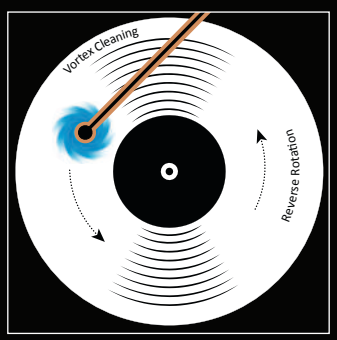

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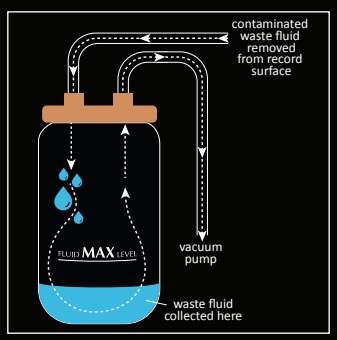

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